

Romans 23 – Who Reigns: Death or Life?

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Romans 5:18-6:2

Prologue: Man Made to Fail?

- Since man was made in the flesh and the flesh was never intended to inherit eternity, did God make man to fail making God the author of sin? God forbid!
 - God was not visibly present to control man during Satan's temptation; however, man could have called on God for assistance at any time (Ro 10:13; 1Co 10:13)
 - Man resisted in his own fleshly strength which failed though aware of Woman's sin (Ge 3:12-13; 1Ti 2:14)

Prologue: Why Did Man Fail?

- Man had no conception of sin, the deceitfulness of flesh nor the weakness of his mind to control the flesh; it took the Moral Law and nearly 1500 years to teach man the sinfulness of sin; still ongoing (Ro 7:14-15)
 - God's commandment was good, "Do not seek knowledge apart from God" (Paraphrase)
 - Sin and Satan, due to the commandment, enticed man who was warned of death violating the commandment (Ge 2:15-17; Ju 1:12-18)

Prologue: Purpose of Failure?

- God provides a way out of all temptation; the answer to all sin in all time is faith in God (Jesus) (Ro 3:21-26, 8:34; 1Co 10:13)
- Man, made in God's image, was to have God's perspective on Good and evil when completed (Ge 1:26-27)
- Man had to first know God's goodness to know evil (Mt 10:10)
- Man can only understand evil *experientially*; since the Fall man is required to discern between good and evil and choose the good relying on God (He 5:14)
 - God has no evil and does not use evil to test people, that is Satan's realm;
 - However, God, being omniscient does have complete knowledge of evil
 - Man chose to have knowledge of evil apart from God, by becoming evil (Is 1:12-18)

Man Sinned Before Eating

- Adam was not deceived but sinned knowingly choosing Woman and flesh over Christ; fleshly nature (Ro 8:6-8, 7:14)
- Without the revelation given to Paul and written in the Bible, we would remain ignorant of this important fact
- Paul suggests that Man sinned because he wanted sole rule over the earth apart from God
- Satan wanted to have sole rule over Creation; he rebelled against God to seize power in Heaven (Is 14:13-14)

They Were Both Deceived

- Satan and Man were both deceived for in sin the only ruler is Death: Eternal separation from God (1Co 15:26)
- Satan appears as the ultimate enemy; however, he has no power except as God allows (Job 1-2; Is 14:15-19; 2Th 2:3-12)
- Death is not a created being but the demand of Law without mercy indicting all sinners as prisoners separated from God for eternity (Gal 2:13-15)
- Christ's payment for sin satisfied justice disarming death

Incoherency of Works Salvation

- Works salvation seeks to find a balance between good and evil so man may attain salvation apart from Christ
 - How many offenses does it take to invoke Death? One!
 - Once violated there are no amount of works that can remove the indictment of death (Isa. 2:30)
 - Works assumes that a greater number of good works can atone for a violation; wrong, for man is born in sin and thus can produce no good works: remains in sin, death (Ps 51:5; Mk 10:18)

One Man's Sin Affected Everyone

- One Man's offense affected everyone born of man (Nu 14:18; Je 31:30)
 - The influences of sins are passed from one generation to the next; i.e., children learn from the parents
 - However, each person will answer for their own sins and not for the sins of their fathers or adult children
 - Adam's one sin was passed on to all people; thus, all are under the indictment of death; separation from God

The Lake of Fire is God's Wrath in that the Lost are given over to the Seraphim who search everyone for a speck of God's righteousness so they might be released; alas, sinners wanted to be separated from God, He is granting their wish

One Man's Atonement...

- One Man's atoning action leads to acquittal and life for all who believe in Christ (Isa 53:10; Col 2:13-14)
 - God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, though without sin, to pay the penalty Law demanded for sin so that all who believe shall be saved (Ro 8:3-4)
 - Thus, through his one act on the stauros, many are made righteous being covered with His righteousness (Ep 4:20-24)

Therefore reliance on keeping the Law is without merit as it is the Law, and Satan, who accuse the sinner
The Law is the Indictment and Satan, the District Attorney, who accuse the brethren day and night before God
Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the Advocates before the Judge, God, and Law who acquit those whom God chose (Ep 1:3-10)

Reigning in...

- Herein is the truth of Adam's sin revealed
 - Death reigned through Adam's one offense so all die
 - Implies that Adam wanted to reign but was deceived, though warned by God, of eternal separation - Death
 - Those covered in Christ's righteousness shall reign in life through Christ based on the gift of His righteousness
 - Essence of Grace: absolute strong covering the absolute weak who otherwise have no hope, ever because of Law

This means that Adam had sinned at some point before eating of the Tree of Knowledge
It is unclear if he sinned after Women or if he sinned before her and allowed her
To face Satan alone to fall with him; a king needs a queen, making his deliberate sin the more heinous

Work as Judgment

- God declared that after sinning Man had to work to subdue the earth and make a living
 - Though often viewed in a negative context this was not punishment but the reality of being god
 - Christ declared that the Father and He were working (Jo 5:17)
 - God rested from Creation, not from running Creation
 - Man wanted to rule the earth will take constant work

Therefore the sentence of work, and the resistance of God's creation being subjected to sinful man,
Was not a spiteful punishment but imposition of the responsibility of being god whose domain is earth
However, since man is now mortal, future generations were required and giving life is not a task to take lightly

Power of One

- As Two emphasizes the similarities or differences between two qualities, in this case the two Adams, so also does One emphasize the power of completeness
 - One man's offense - Death through sin on all people
 - One man's obedience - Eternal Life and Grace on all who accept Christ in faith; which is a gift of God
 - It is Christ alone who conquered Death by His death (1Co 15:54-57)

Law and Grace

- God gave the Moral Law so people could learn of sin's utter corruption and complete hopelessness of works
 - Law is good, defining God's nature via outward acts
 - A loving God gives warning of the sinfulness of sin
 - God makes a way of escape from sin via His Son
 - Total sinfulness could not out match grace's forgiveness; the more heinous the sins, the greater the power of grace to forgive and acquit

Not a War or Contest

- Man's philosophy {religions} describe good and evil as locked in an eternal but equal contest keeping balance
 - This worldview is gained by ignoring God's Bible truth
 - Sin is not stronger than Christ; an illusion
 - Satan's & man's rebellion unleashed Death, indictment for violating God's Law, defined by His commandments
 - God, never touched by Death, provides man a means of escaping (Second) Death by faith in Christ (Ro 20:10)

Illogic of the Lost

- If grace grows as sin grows then should we not sin in order to increase grace in the World? This is the illogic of sinful people seeking self-justification by works
 - This is simply an excuse to continue in sin; to enjoy pleasures of sin and demand forgiveness without faith (He 11:25)
 - Indicative of a lost mind loving the ways of the World (Je 1:5-8; 4:1-4)
 - Those loving the world are God's self-declared enemies

Believers Do Not Escape Death

- Paul introduces a new concept to people to expand their understanding of salvation's impact
 - Accepting Christ's atonement on the stauros is not simply a verbal assent without changes; lost attitude
 - At moment of salvation the sin nature dies, replaced by the new nature (Ro 5:17)
 - Thus, one becomes *dead* to sin, except in the flesh

Epilogue: Man Sinned Before Eating

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Expanding Christian Understanding

- Paul laid the foundation of how Jesus as man provided life for all who believe in the face of Adam's offense that brought all people under the reign of Death
 - Paul begins to explain that Christians are dead to sin, released from its power of Death
 - Unfortunately, then as now, many believers seek to live with one foot in the world and one foot in Heaven; God is not mocked: we give an account before the Bema Seat (1Co 13:12; 2Co 5:10; Ga 6:7-8; Jn 1:5-8, 13:15)