

DIE IN ADAM, MADE ALIVE IN CHRIST

Rom.5:12-19

Ed Dye

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Based on Rom.5:12-19 we shall be discussing what all men lost in Adam and then will regain in Christ. This raises the question: What did all men lose in Adam which is to be regained in Christ?
2. This section of the book of Romans is to be recognize as a difficult part of the book to understand and/or explain.
3. This is evident for different reasons, one of which is due to the variety of ideas and different interpretations placed upon it.
4. Rom.5:12-19 is often misunderstood and thus perverted and misapplied.
5. Remember this: We must be convinced that though difficult, we know in light of other passages, it can be understood. See Jno.8:32; Eph.3:4,5; 5:17; Cf. 2Pet.3:15,16.

II. DISCUSSION

A. **THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE DIFFERENT POSITIONS OCCUPIED REGARDING OUR TEXT, OR AT LEAST THREE DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OFFERED AS EXPLANATIONS OF THE TEXT BY PROFESSED BIBLE BELIEVERS.**

1. Those of Calvinistic persuasion claim this text deals with Adamic sin, or original sin. (Explain)
2. Others, among whom are some brethren in Christ, interpret it something like the following: Adam introduced sin into the world among men by his disobedience in the Garden of Eden, which brought about his condemnation. Then **all men** influenced by his sinful action followed suit as it were and have become guilty of their own personal sin and are thus condemned; that this is how or why **all men**, or **the many**, or **the whole**, were “**made sinners**” and stand “**condemned**,” – a condemnation in sin such as that taught in Rom.3:23; Gal.3:22; Rom.8:8.
3. Others, also among brethren in Christ, of whom I am one, hold the position that this text is discussing what the “many” (the whole) or “all men” lost unconditionally in Adam or upon Adam’s transgression in the Garden of Eden, and that what they lost upon Adam’s one unrighteous

act, they find or regain unconditionally in Jesus Christ by his righteous act.

- a. In other words, my position is that this text teaches that **all men** die, or suffer the sentence of physical death unconditionally in Adam, and that **all men** are **made alive**, or resurrected from the dead unconditionally, or have the **free gift unto justification of life**, in Christ.
4. Naturally, I deny and refute interpretations #1 and #2, and defend my own.

B. IN DEFENCE OF MY OWN INTERPRETATION CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS WITH ME.

1. In arriving at the truth taught, the bottom line so-to-speak, in Vv.12-19, we must consider this:
 - a. What one thing happened to “**the many**” (the whole), or to “**all men**” unconditionally, as to the destiny of their physical body, their physical life, not their soul, upon Adam’s “**offence**” or his “**disobedience**” in the Garden of Eden in eating of the forbidden fruit? Gen.2:16,17; Gen.3; Heb.9:27; 1Cor.15:21a,22a.
 - b. What shall happen, or what is destined to happen, to “**the many**” (the whole), or to “**all men**” unconditionally, as to their physical body after death as a result of or by the righteous act of Jesus Christ? See Ac.4:1,2; 24:15; 1Cor.15:21,22,25,26; Heb.9:27; 2Cor.5:10; 2Tim.4:1.
 - c. Or, to state it another way, What sentence or what “**condemnation**” was passed upon “**the many**” (the whole), or “**all men**” upon the unrighteous act of Adam in the Garden of Eden, and what is to happen to that sentence of physical death or condemnation by Jesus’ righteous act?
2. Further thought, take note of what Vv.12-19 are not discussing.
 - a. Men, any men, much less all men, being or becoming guilty of Adamic sin, or of the guilt of Adam’s sin being imputed to man, or man being born in sin!
 - b. Men becoming sinners by actual, personal transgression of God’s law, either in the O.T. or N.T.
3. The main hindrance to proper exegesis of Vv.12-19 has been a failure to contextually consider the contrasts in these verses: Contrasts in action; Contrasts in the result of the action.

- a. Adam's one unrighteous action (his offence, or disobedience) over against Jesus Christ's one righteous action (his obedience).
 - b. By the one act of one condemnation came upon "the many" (the whole), upon "all men"; by the one act of one "the free gift" is upon "the many" (the whole) or upon "all men", unto "justification of life," V.18.
 - c. By the one act of one "the many" (the whole) or "all men" were "made sinners," but by the one act of one shall "the many" (the whole) or "all men" be "made righteous," V.19.
 - d. In other words, the act of the one (Jesus Christ) cancels out the act of the other (Adam) as to the sentence of physical death. For Jesus Christ "must reign", where he is now reigning, "till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed (by him) is death (physical death)," 1Cor.15:25,26.
4. Now, a closer look at vv.16-19 to determine not only what is said but what is meant by what is said in this context by way of explaining what is introduced in V.12 about death having passed upon all men, then being parenthetically explained in Vv.13-17, with the obvious connection to and complete explanation of V.12 beginning at V.18 and concluded in V.19.
- a. V.16: "...for the **judgment** was by one (i.e. Adam) to **condemnation** (to all, necessarily implied)"
 - (1) But condemnation to what?
 - (2) The sentence of physical death passed upon all men upon Adam's offence.
 - b. V.17: "For by one man's (Adam's) **offence** death reigned (over all, V.15) by one (by Adam)."
 - (1) What death reigned over all men?
 - (2) The physical death penalty? Spiritual death penalty?
 - (3) Only one death penalty reigned over all men upon Adam's disobedience and that was the physical death penalty! (**All men**, includes even infants who died the death of this context; but not a death because of any sin they had committed.)
 - (4) By contrast V.17 also says: "All men (nec. Implied) by the righteous gift of God shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ."
 - c. V.18: "...by the **offence** of one (i.e., Adam) **judgment** came upon **all men to condemnation...**"
 - (1) But condemnation to what?

- (2) Again, it must be the sentence of physical death upon all men – which included infants. Cf. Heb.9:27; 1Cor.15:21a,22a.
 - (3) By contrast V.18b says: “by the righteous act of one (Jesus Christ) the **free gift** came upon all men unto justification of life.”
- d. V.19 tells us what “the many” (the whole) or the “all” were “made” by the one (Adam) and, on the other hand, what the same “all” were “made” by the other one (by Jesus Christ).
- (1) “For as by one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience “many” (i.e., the whole, all men) were **made sinners...**”
 - (a) “Made sinners” in the sense that they were constituted or treated as sinners in that they had to suffer the sentence of the physical death penalty passed on all men.
 - (2) “so by the obedience of one (Jesus Christ) shall “many” (i.e., the whole, all) be **made righteous.**”
 - (a) As many in the one as in the other.
 - (b) Made righteous (or experienced justification of or unto life, Vv.16,18.
 - (c) That is, be acquitted of the penalty of physical death.
 - (d) Be raised from the death by Jesus Christ.
 - (3) The act of the one (Jesus Christ) canceled out the act of the other (Adam). In other words, We die in Adam unconditionally. We are made alive in Christ unconditionally.
- e. A reminder: V.16 says, “the free gift is...unto justification,” while V.18 speaks of “the free gift upon all men unto justification of life” (or justification which results in life from the death, or acquittal of the sentence of physical death upon all men. See Ac.4:1,2; 24:15; 1Cor.15:21,22,25,26.
- f. Note this also: In each case, what they were made by the one (Adam) and what they were made by the other (Jesus Christ) was unconditional on man’s part.
- (1) Again, as many in the one case as in the other; no less in the one as the other.
 - (2) Therefore, it could only be referring to the sentence of physical death passed upon all men upon Adam’s offence or his disobedience; then, the release from, or the acquittal

of that sentence, or the resurrection to life from physical death for all men by the obedience of Jesus Christ.

- (3) Both the physical death of man and his resurrection from the dead are unconditional on man's part. The one was conditioned upon Adam's one unrighteous act; the other, on Jesus Christ's one righteous act!
5. The truth of what is meant by V.12, the bottom line, is evident when you consider:
 - a. That Vv.13-17 are parenthetical.
 - b. Therefore that Vv.18,19 are Paul's final and complete explanation and conclusion on the meaning of what he affirmed in V.12 about death having passed upon all men.
 - (1) By putting V.12 together with Vv.18,19 without the parenthetical verses in between, the truth is easily seen!
 - c. (Thus the death in V.12 refers to physical death decreed upon all men upon Adam's offence, not to spiritual death upon man's personal sin.)
 - d. (And being made righteous and/or the free gift upon all men unto justification of life refers to be made alive, or being raised from the dead upon Jesus Christ's righteous act.)
 - e. The connection between "for that all have sinned" in V.12, and "were made sinners" in V.19, then "made righteous" in V.19; how can one escape the obvious conclusion: We die in Adam; we are made alive in Christ. All (even infants) die in the one. All (even infants) are made alive in Christ!
 6. For further proof of the truth of what is meant by V.12, take notice of what "**for that**" means in the expression "**for that** all have sinned," (KJV).
 - a. "**For that**" is from the Greek (Epsilon, Phi, Omega--) meaning (not "because of", as often translated) but, "upon which thing" (matter or subject) "all have sinned; i.e., "where upon all have sinned. Cf. V.19, "made sinners" (constituted or treated as sinners in that they had to suffer the sentence of the physical death penalty).
 - (1) Notice its use and meaning in many other passages (where the **underlined word** in our notes is from the same Greek term as in Rom.5:12:
 - (a) Mk.11:2: "...ye shall find a colt tied, whereon ("upon which," Berry's Lit. trans.) never man sat..."

- (b) Lk.4:29: "...and led him to the brow of the hill **whereon** ("upon which," lit. trans) their city was built..."
- (c) Ac.7:33: "...put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place **where** ("on which," lit. trans.) thou standest is holy ground."
- (d) Phil.3:12: "...but I follow after, if that I may apprehend **that for which** also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus (KJV)." Berry's Lit. translation: "but I am pursuing, if also I may lay hold **for that** (Gr. same as Rom.5:12) also I was laid hold of by the Christ Jesus."
 - (1) Literally, "**upon which**", with reference being to **the ground or basis on which** Jesus laid hold on Paul.
- (e) Phil.4:10: "...now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; **wherein** ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity" (KJV).
 - (1) Berry's Lit. Trans: "...that now at length ye revived (your) thinking of me; **although** also ye were thinking, but ye were lacking opportunity."
 - (2) Also Young's Analytical Concordance, 365, defines it "**upon, about**".

III. CONCLUSION

1. Without a doubt in my mind Vv.12-19 are discussing what all men lost unconditionally upon Adam's unrighteous act (or that all men, even infants, die in Adam) and that what they lost in Adam they regain unconditionally (even infants) in Jesus Christ (or made alive in Christ; raised from the dead).
2. I can't see how the context will allow any other conclusion.
3. Then we must see and understand the distinction between what is taught in vv.12-19 and what is taught in Vv.20-21.
 - a. Vv.12-19 discuss what pertains solely to the physical life and body of man. Vv.20,21, what pertains to both body and soul; to eternal life in heaven; made possible by Jesus Christ.
 - b. Vv.20,21 discuss and emphasize the fact that Jesus Christ by his death has made possible **MUCH MORE** than a resurrection of the body from the dead for all men; he has made **eternal life** (on certain conditions, of course, on the part of man) at the time of the resurrection of the dead.
 - c. The former was unconditional; the **much more** in conditional!

