

Finally. The church has waited too long for an exegetical excavation and application of the Bible's teaching about ethnicity, Christ, the cross, and our new humanity. Jarvis Williams serves us all by helping us to see more clearly the implications of Paul's theology of the cross and reconciliation. Heartily commended.

Thabiti Anyabwile

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Jarvis Williams has provided a much needed contribution to the work of racial reconciliation and Christian unity. I applaud the work for its foundational biblical and theological commitments. Williams informs both head and heart, while challenging us toward faithfulness in our thinking and our living. While seeking to dispel numerous misunderstandings, both old and new, he invites readers to participate in vital kingdom work. It is a genuine joy to recommend this volume, which hopefully will have a shaping influence on both church and society for years to come.

David S. Dockery

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One New Man: The Cross and Racial Reconciliation in Pauline Theology by Jarvis Williams takes the ongoing evangelical dialogue on racial reconciliation into some helpful new directions. With meticulous detail Williams presents racism as the consequence of the fallen human condition. For a solution Williams turns to Paul's theology of the reconciling work of Christ on the cross and the new humanity that results from it. This work may be a little heady and technical at points. But it is a thesis that takes us much deeper in our consideration of the perversion of the human condition, and the solution is far more substantial than some of what has come down the evangelical pike.

Ken Jones

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Jarvis Williams brings considerable exegetical skill and personal experience as an African-American scholar to bear on the critical issue of racial reconciliation in the American church. His book offers the reader

an approach to the subject that is rarely found—a thorough exegetical study of the biblical passages on the teaching of reconciliation.

Kenneth A. Mathews

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Jarvis Williams's book on racial reconciliation is an important contribution to a sadly neglected issue in our churches. The book is characterized by careful study of relevant biblical passages and suggestions for application. Particularly important, in light of the current cultural climate, is the author's distinction between ethnic diversity and racial reconciliation. The church, he argues, must not be content with diversity; it must push forward to a biblically distinctive, Christ-centered and Spirit-led embrace of one another in love.

Douglas J. Moo

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One of the saddest realities of American church life is that too many of our congregations are racially and socially isolated. One of the most joyous realities of the contemporary American church is that God is calling out young leaders who are willing to seek to change this. Jarvis Williams is a brilliant, young New Testament scholar. He also has a burning passion for churches that picture the gospel in their racial makeup and witness. Read this book and ask the Spirit to show you your place in helping the church model the "one new man" of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Racial reconciliation—and not just racial diversity, as Williams argues—is fundamental to the gospel. Accentuated by passion and personal experience, Jarvis Williams engages in a rich biblical and theological exploration of this important issue facing the church today.

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The apostle Paul is clear: our vertical reconciliation with God occurs as he reconciles horizontally those who have been at enmity with one another, who then are reconciled together, as one new man, to God in Christ (Eph 2:14–18). So, to miss horizontal reconciliation is to miss something central to the gospel itself. Jarvis Williams demonstrates in a clear and compelling way that racial reconciliation is no nice optional “extra” to the substance and proclamation of the gospel but is at the heart of that message of the cross itself. Williams evidences both exegetical care and theological acumen in his discussion of key Pauline texts that should inform significantly our views of racial reconciliation. And the practical impact of this book is monumental. There are few issues of our day more urgent to “get right” than this one, and we owe Dr. Williams a deep debt of gratitude for the excellent treatment he has here produced.

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foreword

I am not denying that we as evangelical Christians may be able to learn some truths about racial reconciliation from those in the secular world. Also, I freely confess that Christians who have preached the gospel have too often been on the wrong side of the issue so that their words and their actions have promoted racism. As Christians who believe the Bible's teachings, we have many sins to confess with respect to racism. Even though I am not a big proponent of apologies for what past generations did, I think the Southern Baptist Convention (of which I am a member) rightly apologized in 1995 for its role in U.S. slavery. It was imperative to clarify that we do not endorse the sins of the past, even while we confess that we ourselves are not entirely free from the sins of racism and prejudice.

It is helpful here to review some of the sins confessed in the resolution adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention:

WHEREAS, Our relationship to African-Americans has been hindered from the beginning by the role that slavery played in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS Many of our Southern Baptist forbears defended the right to own slaves, and either participated in, supported, or acquiesced in the particularly inhumane nature of American slavery; and

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WHEREAS, In later years Southern Baptists failed, in many cases, to support, and in some cases opposed, legitimate initiatives to secure the civil rights of African-Americans . . .

WHEREAS, Racism has divided the body of Christ and Southern Baptists in particular, and separated us from our African-American brothers and sisters; and

WHEREAS, Many of our congregations have intentionally and/or unintentionally excluded African-Americans from worship, membership, and leadership; and

WHEREAS, Racism profoundly distorts our understanding of Christian morality, leading some Southern Baptists to believe that racial prejudice and discrimination are compatible with the Gospel . . .¹

The resolution then continues more specifically, saying, “We lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest, and we recognize that the racism which yet plagues our culture today is inextricably tied to the past,” and “we apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously (Psalm 19:13) or unconsciously (Leviticus 4:27).”²

Furthermore, in this resolution Southern Baptists asked for “forgiveness from our African-American brothers and sisters” and committed themselves to “eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry.”³ This resolution reminds us of past sins. Most would agree that there is still much work to be done.

Certainly, we as evangelical Christians may learn from the world, but I have a complaint as well. Why do we so often think that the world has a better answer to the problem of racial prejudice

¹The entire resolution may be found at <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=899>. Accessed on April 17, 2009.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

than we do? Why do we so often follow secular advice “lock, stock, and barrel”? Why do we have the very same multicultural programs with a thin Christian veneer? Why is our diversity training so often virtually indistinguishable from that of the world? I can only conclude that we as evangelical Christians believe that we must look to the world for solutions to racism. I do not have space to argue for this here, but we need to evaluate critically the multicultural and diversity programs that are rife in our culture. In many ways they are contrary to the gospel, and instead of advancing racial reconciliation, they actually foster and encourage racial polarization. We as Christians have a better answer to racial problems—an answer that goes back to Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul, and others who wrote sacred Scripture. In other words, we as Christians believe that the answer to racism is found in the Bible. The answer is found in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If the answer is found in the gospel, why have Christians so often been on the wrong side of the issue? Too often we do not live by the gospel we proclaim. Cultural norms and sinful patterns crowd out the liberating message that Jesus taught. Even as Christians we easily forget about the good news and live by another norm. But our failure to live consistently by the gospel does not mean that we should abandon the gospel as the answer. Rather, the gospel calls upon us to confess our sins, repent of our evil, and commit ourselves anew to Jesus Christ. Many Christians today are convinced, as they adopt wholesale the multicultural and diversity agenda of our culture, that they represent the vanguard of righteousness. But insofar as they promote a norm other than the gospel, they lead us astray.

How refreshing, then, it is to read a book by an African-American scholar where the New Testament message of reconciliation through Christ is taken seriously as the answer to our racial problems. Jarvis Williams believes that the gospel of Christ speaks to our racial sins and prejudices today, and he shows through careful exegesis what the gospel has to say to our churches and our world. All of us who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters. We are all descendants of Adam (Acts 17:26; Rom 5:12–19), and we have all sinned and fall short of what God requires (Rom 3:23). We are all justified in the same way through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:28–30), and we are reconciled to God

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and one another through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:14–18). As Jarvis Williams shows, our fundamental task is not to become one, but to live out the oneness that has already been accomplished in Christ. We *are* brothers and sisters because we belong to Jesus Christ. May we live out this glorious gospel! May the world know that we are Christians by our love for one another (John 13:34–35)! Jarvis Williams's book does not pretend to provide the answer to all the questions before us, but it provides a rock-solid foundation and starting point.

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2

the reason for racial reconciliation

A number of biblical texts claim that sin is the fundamental reason that races need to be reconciled first to God and second to one another. The goal here is not to present an exhaustive biblical investigation, but to provide evidence from key texts to demonstrate that sin shattered humankind's relationship with God and one another.

The Consequences of Sin

Genesis

Sin is the fundamental reason that human beings (regardless of their race) need to be reconciled first to God and second to one another, for sin has shattered the relationship of human beings with God and one another. This assertion is evident from the Bible's presentation of the broken relationship of human beings with God and one another. The entrance of sin into God's good creation resulted from Adam and Eve's disobedience. The sin introduced by them was the fundamental cause of the division between God and human beings.

Genesis 1–2 states that God created the heavens and earth and everything in them. After completing his creation, God announced that everything that he made was “exceedingly good”

(Gen 1:31).¹ God's good creation culminates with male and female human beings (Gen 1:26–31), for they were the “crown of God's handiwork.”² Genesis 1 makes that point evident since (1) its creation account emphasizes human life as the pinnacle of God's creation;³ (2) divine deliberation occurs prior to God's creation of humankind;⁴ (3) the expression “let us make,” which refers to human life in Gen 1:26, replaces the impersonal words “let there be,” which refer to the rest of God's creation in Genesis 1;⁵ (4) God creates male and female in his “image” and “likeness” (Gen 1:26);⁶ (5) the author⁷ emphasizes God's creation of humans by using the verb בָּרָא (“to create”) on three occasions,⁸ and (6) the author gives more written space to the creation of human life than to other aspects of creation (see Genesis 1–2).⁹

After the author discusses the completion of God's good creation, he records the introduction of sin into God's good creation. Sin was introduced into God's creation via Adam and Eve's rebellion in the garden of Eden (Gen 3:6–7).¹⁰ The “fall” was human-

¹Unless otherwise indicated, all translations throughout the book are mine.

²K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 160.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid. Genesis 1:26, translated from the Masoretic Text (MT), reads as follows: “And God said: ‘Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. And let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over all the earth and over every animal which crawls upon the earth.’” As can be seen from the preceding translation, the phrases “let us make” (נַעֲשֶׂה), “in our image” (בְּדְמוּתֵנוּ), and “according to our likeness” (כְּצִלְמֵנוּ) are plural forms, and each plural form refers to God (see Gen 3:22; 11:7; and Isa 6:8). The Septuagint's rendering of these words supports the plurality of these terms conveyed in the MT: καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν . . . Since in Gen 1:26 the MT and the Septuagint (LXX) suggest that there is one God with the terms אֱלֹהִים and ο θεός and since in Gen 1:27 the MT and the LXX affirm God's singularity (בְּצַלְמִי, “in his image”; κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ, “according to the image of God”), the plural terms “let us make,” “in our image,” and “according to our likeness” in Gen 1:26, the context of Genesis 1–2, and a canonical reading of Gen 1:26 support that the plurals in Gen 1:26 refer to a “divine plurality” and thus provide evidence that God is a Trinity. For a similar view, which provides interaction with the major views and a bibliography, see Mathews (*Genesis 1–11:26*, 160–63).

⁷There is a longstanding debate regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch. The term “author” instead of “authors” is used throughout this chapter to refer to the composer of the Pentateuch, that is, to the singular authorship of the majority of the Pentateuch. For a recent, conservative critique of the documentary hypothesis, for a survey of antecedent discussions regarding Pentateuchal Criticism, and for a bibliography, see T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).

⁸So Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 160.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Old Testament scholars debate both the meaning and authenticity of Genesis 3. For example, see L. F. Hartman, “Sin in Paradise,” *CBQ* 20 (1958): 26–40; J. M. Higgins, “Myth

kind's most tragic mistake, since all forms of evil flow from it and since a universal curse resulted from Adam's and Eve's disobedience (see Genesis 3; Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:22). The “fall” severed humankind's relationship with both God and one another (see Genesis 3; Rom 3:9–19; 3:23).

Early in the Genesis narrative, the author mentions that God created a garden in Eden (Gen 2:8) and placed trees in it from which Adam and Eve could eat (Gen 2:9). The author highlights in Gen 2:9 two specific trees that God placed in the midst of the garden of Eden, trees more important than the rest: (1) the tree of life and (2) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.¹¹ The narrative of Genesis 2 emphasizes the tree of knowledge. Interpretation of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil receives continued debate because textual clues and textual commentary about it are

of Eve: The Temptress,” *JAAR* 44 (1976): 639–47; J. T. Walsh, “Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach,” *JBL* 96 (1977): 161–77; J. G. Williams, “Genesis 3,” *Int* 35 (1981): 274–70; D. M. Joy, “Toward a Symbolic Revival: Creation Revisited,” *RelEd* 80 (1985): 399–412; T. Stordalen, “Man, Soil, Garden: Basic Plot in Genesis 2–3 Considered,” *JSOT* 53 (1992): 3–25; L. M. Bechtel, “Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Myth about Human Maturation,” *JSOT* 67 (1995): 3–26; W. Vogels, “Like One of Us, Knowing Good and Evil (Gen 3:22),” *Semeia* 81 (1998): 144–57; W. P. Townsend, “Eve's Answer to the Serpent: An Alternative Paradigm for Sin and Some Implications in Theology,” *CTJ* 33 (1998): 399–420; J. E. McKinlay, “To Eat or Not to Eat: Where Is Wisdom in This Choice?” *Semeia* 86 (1999): 73–84; B. Gosse, “L'écriture de Genesis 3, Le Serpent Dualité de la femme et L'home,” *BN* 98 (1999): 19–20; G. A. Yee, “Gender, Class, and the Social-Scientific Study of Genesis 2–3,” *Semeia* 87 (1999): 177–92; K. I. Parker, “Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Must We Leave Eden, Once and for All?: A Lacanian Pleasure Trip through the Garden,” *JSOT* 83 (1999): 73–84; C. M. Kenneth, “Misspeaking in Eden or Fielding Questions in the Garden (Genesis 2:16–3:13),” *PRSt* 27 (2000): 235–47; J. C. Collins, “What Happened to Adam and Eve? A Literary-Theological Approach to Genesis 3,” *Presb* 27 (2001): 12–44; M. Emmrich, “The Temptation Narrative of Genesis 3:1–6: A Prelude to the Pentateuch and the History of Israel,” *EvQ* 73 (2001): 3–20; W. Dumbrell, “Genesis 2:1–3: A Biblical Theology of Creation Covenant,” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 25 (2001): 219–30; E. A. Phillips, “Serpent Intertexts: Tantalizing Twists in the Tales,” *BBR* 10 (2002): 233–45; H.-P. Müller, “Eva und Das Paradies,” in *Ex Mesopotamia et Syria Lux* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2002), 501–10; J. A. Soggin, “And You Will Be Like God and Know What Is Good and What Is Bad: Genesis 2–3,” in *Sefer Moshe* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 191–93; A. Wénin and J. Bowden, “The Serpent and the Woman, or the Process of Evil according to Genesis 2–3,” in *Original Sin* (London: SCM Press, 2004), 41–48; C. Boureux and C. Theobald, *Original Sin: A Code of Fallibility* (London: SCM Press, 2004); P. B. Yoder, “Will the Real Adam Please Stand Up!” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 58 (2006): 99–101; J. McIntyre, “The Real Adam and Original Sin,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 58 (2006): 90–98; J. I. Gellman, “Gender and Sexuality in the Garden of Eden,” *Theology and Sexuality* 12 (2006): 319–335.

¹¹The phrases ועץ הדעת טוב ורע and ועץ החיים בתוך הגן (“and the tree of the living ones in the midst of the garden” and “and the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil”) introduced by waw-consecutives suggest that the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of God and of evil are different trees.

lacking.¹² Nevertheless, Gen 2:16–17 indicates that God prohibited Adam and Eve from partaking of this tree (Gen 2:16–17). Their eating from it enabled them to attain godlike knowledge (Gen 3:5,22).

When God led Adam to the garden to toil and to attend to the ground, he specifically told him that he was permitted to eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of knowledge in the midst of the garden (Gen 2:16–17). God also told Adam that on the day that he ate from the forbidden tree, “he will certainly die” (Gen 2:16–17). A serpent, however, appears in the garden in order to deceive Eve (Gen 3:1). Both a Jewish reading (Wis 2:24; Sir 21:2; 4 Macc 18:8) and a canonical reading (Rom 16:20; Rev 12:9,14–15; 20:2) of the text suggest that the serpent was Satan’s instrument and possibly Satan himself in the form of a serpent.¹³ The serpent’s deceptive purposes are evident in the author’s comments that the serpent was “craftier” than any living thing that God had made (Gen 3:1) and in the author’s presentation of the serpent as the reason Eve doubted God’s initial word about the tree (Gen 3:4–5).¹⁴ Unfortunately, both Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s stipulation regarding the forbidden tree (Gen 3:6–7). Their disobedience introduced sin into God’s good creation (see Genesis 3), and sin produced many devastating consequences for his creation (e.g., Genesis 4–6).

Broken Relationships: Sin Has Broken Humankind’s Relationship with God

The sin of Adam and Eve severed humankind’s relationship with God.¹⁵ As a result, humankind’s spiritual condition dramatically changed after the fall. Prior to the fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed the presence of God (see Gen 3:8), they enjoyed the garden of Eden (Gen 2:15), and they embraced their nakedness (Gen 2:25).

¹²For example, see Mathews, *Genesis*, 203–07; N. Ansell, “The Call of Wisdom/The Voice of the Serpent: A Canonical Approach to the Tree of Knowledge,” *CSR* 31 (2001): 31–57.

¹³The OT nowhere states that the serpent is Satan, but the NT appears to equate them (2 Cor 11:3; Rev 12:9). See Mathews, *Genesis*, 233–34, esp. 233.

¹⁴Although Job 1:9–11 and 2:4–5 do not refer to Satan as a serpent, Satan questions God’s word regarding Job similarly as the serpent questions God’s word when speaking with Eve in Genesis 2.

¹⁵Eve sinned and violated God’s command first, but Gen 3:9–11 emphasizes the fault of Adam. The dialogue between God and Adam and God’s confrontation with Adam before Eve suggest that Adam must bear greater culpability than Eve since God created Adam first (see Rom 5:12–21; 1 Tim 2:13–14).

After their disobedience, their relationship with God significantly differed.¹⁶

After their disobedience, when Adam and Eve heard the voice of God, who was walking in the garden in the cool of the day,¹⁷ they hid themselves “from the face of the Lord God in the midst of the garden” (Gen 3:8). They did not flee to God, who was their source of life and existence. Rather, they fled from him. This garden, which God provided them as a source of sustenance and enjoyment and over which he placed them to cultivate (Gen 2:8–9, 15–16), became a place of refuge for them. It became a fortress where they sought to hide from their Creator (Gen 3:8).¹⁸

Genesis 3:9 supports the view that sin shattered their relationship with God: “And the Lord God said to the man: ‘where?’” Since Gen 3:8 states that Adam and Eve hid themselves in the midst of the garden, the interrogative *איכה* (“where”) could convey the idea of “where are you?” Furthermore, since Genesis 1–2 emphasizes God’s comprehensive sovereignty over all things as the Creator and Sustainer of his creation, God’s question (“Where are you?”) implies neither that his knowledge is deficient nor that he is unaware of the physical location of Adam and Eve.¹⁹ Instead, this question is rhetorical and serves to provoke Adam to consider his transgression.²⁰ In addition, God’s question likely implies a deficiency in Adam’s and Eve’s spiritual condition since sin entered God’s good creation through their rebellion against him.

Genesis 3:10 conveys the spiritual deficiency of Adam and Eve. Adam said, “I heard your sound in the garden, I saw that I am naked, and I hid myself.” Adam and Eve hid themselves because of their nakedness (Gen 3:10).²¹ Yet, it is equally true that they hid themselves out of fear of God because their sin had broken their relationship with God. That is, their original status before God and their fellowship with him were shattered as soon as they

¹⁶See Mathews, *Genesis*, 239–40.

¹⁷The language of God “walking” in the garden emphasizes his presence with his people and particularly the fellowship that they enjoyed with him. See Mathews, *Genesis*, 239.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹The view popularly known as Open-theism posits a different thesis regarding God’s knowledge. For a summary and critique of Open-theism, see B. A. Ware, *God’s Lesser Glory* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2000); *idem*, *God’s Greater Glory* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004).

²⁰Mathews, *Genesis*, 239–40.

²¹Public nakedness was disgraceful both in the ancient Near East and in the Bible (see Gen 9:22–25). Genesis 2:25 suggests the shame of nakedness comes from the presence of sin.

disobeyed. In fact, Adam and Eve did not hide themselves from God until after they had rebelled against him (Gen 3:7–8), for their disobedience against God resulted in a broken relationship (see Gen 2:25; 3:7–10).

God’s dialogue with Adam and Eve in the subsequent verses after the fall in Genesis 3 affirms that sin shattered the relationship that they once enjoyed with him. God asked Adam, “Who made known to you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?” (Gen 3:11).²² Instead of replying with a repentant “yes,” Adam blamed both God and Eve for his sin, saying, “The woman, whom you gave to me, she gave to me from the tree, and I ate” (Gen 3:12).²³

God subsequently interrogates Eve: “What is this that you have done?” (Gen 3:13a). Like Adam, Eve does not respond with repentance. Instead, she demonstrates that she is spiritually dead. She no longer possesses the spiritual innocence that she once had before sin entered the creation, for she blames the serpent for her transgression, saying, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate” (Gen 3:13b). Initially, Eve’s response might seem appropriate since the serpent deceived her (Gen 3:1–5). Her response to God, however, is *only* partially correct since she was also complicit for her disobedience (see Gen 2:17; 3:1–6).²⁴

²²The syntax of the MT suggests that the second part of God’s question to Adam is emphatic: “From the tree, which I commanded you not to eat from, have you eaten?” (המִן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לִבְלֹתִי אֲכַל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֵכֶלֶה). The author records this question with a *casus pendens construction*. He places the prepositional phrase הֵן־הָעֵץ of the main verb first in the main clause; he suspends the main verb אֵכֶלֶה from the prepositional phrase until the end of the sentence; he places a relative clause (הַמִּן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לִבְלֹתִי אֲכַל־מִמֶּנּוּ) within the main verb and the prepositional phrase of the main verb, and he attaches a pronoun, whose antecedent is the tree, to the prepositional phrase that modifies the infinitive in the relative clause (אֲכַל־מִמֶּנּוּ). Such a construction emphasizes the tree, for the tree occurs first in the main clause, the action of the main verb is directed toward the tree, and the relative clause describes the tree. For other examples of the *casus pendens construction*, see P. J. T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: Syntax* (2nd ed.; trans. and rev. T. Muraoka; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2003), 586–87; esp. 587.

²³The author uses another *casus pendens construction* for emphasis in Gen 3:12: וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִדָּם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִיא נָתְנָה־לִּי מִן־הָעֵץ וְאֲכַלְתִּי (‘‘and Adam said: ‘the woman, whom you gave with me, she gave to me from the tree, and I ate.’’’). The latter verse emphasizes the woman’s role in Adam’s sin. Additionally, that Adam’s comments suggest that God is partially to blame for his transgression can be seen at the lexical level by the word נָתַן (‘‘to give’’) that appears twice in Gen 2:12. Adam states that God gave (נָתַתָּה) the woman to him and that she gave to him מִן־הָעֵץ fruit from the forbidden tree. The implication is that if God had not given the woman to him, then he (i.e., Adam) would not have eaten from the forbidden tree.

²⁴Mathews (*Genesis*, 242) notes that unlike Adam, Eve ‘‘can rightly claim to be the victim of the serpent.’’

Genesis 3:1–6 begins by emphasizing the serpent’s craftiness (see Gen 3:1), but the text nowhere suggests that the serpent is solely to blame for Eve’s disobedience or that the serpent forced Adam and Eve to disobey God (see 1 Tim 2:13). Rather, the text simply states that the serpent deceived Eve by contesting God’s word (Gen 3:1–5). The serpent’s contestation caused Eve to question the validity of God’s word (Gen 3:1–5), for she believed the serpent’s words rather than God’s when he asserted that God’s motivation for his prohibiting Adam and Eve from eating fruit from the forbidden tree was to withhold godlike knowledge from them (Gen 3:6; see Gen 3:4–5). Consequently, *only* after believing the serpent’s lie did Eve “see that the tree was good for eating and that it was desirable to both eyes and that the tree was desirable to give insight, and she took from its fruit and ate. And she even gave to her husband with her, and he ate” (Gen 3:6).

Disobedience Produced Spiritual Death

Adam and Eve. The disobedience of Adam and Eve severed humankind’s relationship with God. In other words, as soon as Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they introduced death into God’s good creation.²⁵ After they sinned, God first cursed his good creation (see Gen 3:14–21). This curse and the events that followed it demonstrate that the human condition radically changed after the disobedience and fall of Adam and Eve. Prior to sin’s entrance into the creation, Adam and Eve enjoyed both the presence of God and his creation (see Genesis 1–2). After they sinned, they fled from God’s presence (see Genesis 3). Because of their transgression, God cursed (1) the animals (Gen 3:14), especially the serpent (Gen 3:15), (2) the woman (Gen 3:16), (3) the man (Gen 3:17), and (4) the ground (Gen 3:17–19). This universal curse introduced death into God’s good creation (Gen 3:19) and fulfilled God’s promise to Adam in Gen 2:17 that if he ate from the forbidden tree, he would certainly die.

The death that sin introduced includes both physical and spiritual death. God’s remarks to Adam and Eve after they sinned refer to physical death: “You are dust, and to dust you will return” (Gen 3:19c). That death in Gen 2:17 also refers to spiritual death

²⁵Similarly, J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (trans. H. Beveridge; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 2.1.5.

is evident in the narrative of Genesis 3.²⁶ Genesis 3:8 states that Adam and Eve fled from God after they sinned. Because of their sin, Gen 3:16 states that “enmity” would exist between “his seed” and “her seed” and that the seed of the serpent would crush the heel of the “seed of the woman” while the “seed of the woman” would crush the head of the “seed of the serpent.” A canonical reading of Gen 3:15–16 suggests that Jesus is the promised seed who would fulfill the promise in Gen 3:16. The seed of the woman will crush the seed of the serpent since Jesus crushes Satan under his feet (see Rom 16:20; 1 Cor 15:24–27; Rev 12:17) and since the New Testament states that Jesus is the promised “seed of Abraham” (Gal 3:1–29).²⁷

Genesis 6:5 further indicates that spiritual death resulted from the sin of Adam and Eve. The wickedness of man only multiplied after the fall in Genesis 3: “And the Lord saw that the evil of man multiplied on the earth and [that] every form of thoughts in his heart was only evil all the day” (see Judg 21:25). Thus, since (1) God’s pronouncement of the curse in Gen 3:15–16 results from the entrance of sin into God’s good creation through Adam’s and Eve’s disobedience, (2) God promised in Gen 3:15 that enmity would exist between the woman’s seed and the serpent’s seed, (3) a canonical reading of Gen 3:15 suggests that the serpent’s seed refers to Satan and his offspring and the woman’s seed refers to Jesus and his offspring (see John 7; Galatians 3–4), and (4) Gen 6:5 states that sin multiplied after the fall, one can infer that the woman’s seed serves as a solution to humankind’s spiritual plight, a solution which would have been unnecessary if Adam and Eve had not died spiritually.

Cain and Abel. Spiritual death manifests itself through humankind’s sinful actions in other parts of Genesis. After Genesis 3, spiritual death first manifests itself through Cain. Eve conceived Cain and Abel after she and Adam transgressed God’s command and thus introduced sin into God’s good creation (Gen 4:1, see 3:1–24). When Cain and Abel presented offerings to God, he rejected Cain’s offering and accepted Abel’s (Gen 4:3–5). A canonical reading of the text suggests that God rejected Cain’s offering

²⁶Spiritual death is further supported by a canonical reading of Genesis 3 (see Rom 5:12–21).

²⁷See Mathews, *Genesis*.

because he had not presented it to God by faith (see Heb 11:4).²⁸ Since anything that is not done in faith is sin (Rom 14:23), one can infer from Gen 4:3–5 that God rejected Cain’s offering because it was a sinful offering.²⁹ According to Gen 4:7, sin ruled over Cain, for God informed Cain of the presence of sin in his life and exhorted him to master the power of sin (see Romans 6).³⁰ Other aspects of the text display the impact of sin on Cain. Cain became angry with God after he rejected his offering (Gen 4:6).³¹ He killed his brother (Gen 4:8), and then he lied to God when he questioned him about Abel (Gen 4:9).

The Universal Sinfulness of Humankind. In Genesis 6:1, the human population had vastly increased (see also 5:1–5:32).³² With humankind’s numerical prosperity, sin likewise increased. The zenith of humankind’s sin in Genesis 6 is marked by the marital and sexual relationships between the sons of God and the daughters of men (Gen 6:2,4).³³ Commentators do not agree on the identity of the sons of God since the text does not explicitly state their identity.³⁴ Regardless of their identity, the marriage and sexual relationships between the sons of God and the daughters of men offended God and provoked him to “blot out” humankind. Genesis 6:5–6

²⁸Similarly, Mathews, *Genesis*, 268.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰MT Gen 4:7 is very difficult to translate, which is evidenced by the translation in LXX Gen 4:7. My brief comments above in no way intend to suggest that the grammar of Gen 4:7 is easily understood.

³¹M. I. Gruber (“Was Cain Angry or Depressed?” *BAR* 6 [1980]: 35–36) suggests that the clause *חרה אף* (“anger of a nose”) conveys anger, but the clause *חרה לו* (“it burns to him”), which is similar to the clause in Gen 4:6, conveys despondency. Thus, one could argue that Cain was despondent, not angry. I reject the supposition that Cain was only despondent since the author uses the verb *חרה* (“to be angry”) in Gen 4:5.

³²The focus in Gen 5:1–6:8 is Adam’s family line. Nevertheless, this unit demonstrates that sin vastly multiplied throughout Adam’s line although Seth (Gen 5:6–20) and Enoch (Gen 5:21–24) walked with God.

³³For discussion of the sons of God, see Mathews, *Genesis*, 322–35.

³⁴For example, see F. Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1888), 226; B. S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1960), 49; L. Eslinger, “A Contextual Identification of the bene ha Elohim and Benoth ha Adam in Genesis 6:1–4,” *JOT* 13 (1979): 65–73; W. A. van Gemen, “The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–4 (An Example of Evangelical Demythologization?),” *WTJ* 43 (1981): 320–48; A. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 182. Texts from several pseudepigraphal books (1 Enoch 6–11; Jub 4.15–22; T. Reub. 5.6–7; 2 Enoch 18:3–8; 2 Apoc. Bar. 56.11–14), the DSS (e.g., 1QapGen 2:1,16; CD 2:17–19); Philo (*On the Giants* 2.6), and Josephus (*Ant.* 1.73) suggest that the sons of God in Genesis 6 are rebellious angels. Mathews (*Genesis*, 329–30) is on target when he argues that the “sons of God” refer to the Sethites (i.e., the righteous lineage of Seth) and that the “daughters of men” refer to the Cainites (i.e., the lineage of Cain).

states that “the Lord saw that the evil of men increased in the land, and every form of thoughts in his heart was only evil all the day. And the Lord regretted that he made man in the earth, and he grieved in his heart.” Two events in Gen 6:5–6 especially demonstrate sin’s universal impact upon humankind: (1) human wickedness increased after sin had entered into the creation, and (2) God regretted that he had created human beings.

Rebellion at the Tower of Babel. Humankind’s rebellion at the Tower of Babel demonstrates the impact of sin upon humankind and their spiritual decline. God’s destruction of most of humankind in Genesis 6 did not remedy their problem of sinning (see Genesis 7–10). To the contrary, sin continued to exist after the flood and to manifest itself through sinful actions. Genesis 11, for example, records that human beings spoke one and the same dialect after the flood (Gen 11:1). Hence, humankind was fully united at the dialectical level.³⁵ At the linguistic level, nothing seemingly should have hindered humankind’s relationship with God and one another. Dialectical unanimity was not enough to sustain humankind’s relationship with either God or one another. Humankind’s spiritual deadness is evident here since human beings did not use a universal language to worship and serve God, but instead used it to build a city, to erect a tower, and to make a name for themselves rather than for God (Gen 11:4).³⁶

Sodom and Gomorrah. The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah and God’s destruction of these cities demonstrate the universal impact of sin upon humankind. Sodom and Gomorrah were exceedingly wicked cities (Gen 18:20). While Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom, two “messengers” or “angels” entered the city (Gen 19:1). Lot saw them entering the city from a distance, so he arose to meet them (Gen 19:1). Since Lot’s reaction to these visitors suggests that they were angelic beings, “angels” is the appropriate translation here for the term מלאכים. These angels were likely two of the three angels who appeared to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 18 since the author uses language to describe Abraham’s reaction to the men (Gen 18:1–8), which is similar to what he used to describe Lot’s reaction toward them, since these men journeyed toward

³⁵So Mathews, *Genesis*, 477.

³⁶Similarly, Mathews, *Genesis*, 481–82.

Sodom and Gomorrah after they departed from Abraham (Gen 18:16,21–22), and since the narrative in Genesis 19 begins with comments about “two angels” (Gen 19:1).

Lot persuaded the angels to lodge with him (Gen 19:2–3). As they were preparing to retire in Lot’s house, the citizens of Sodom attempted to have sexual relations with the angels (Gen 19:4–6). The citizens of Sodom surrounded Lot’s house and demanded that Lot surrender the visitors so that they could have sex with them: “Before they lay down, also the men of Sodom, from young to old (all of the people) surrounded against the house from all sides, and they called out to Lot and said to him: where are the men who entered to you tonight? Cause them to come out to us so that we will know them” (Gen 19:5–6).³⁷ The verb *ידעה* (“to know”) refers to sexual intercourse in Gen 19:5 since Lot offered the Sodomites his virgin daughters instead of the angels (Gen 19:8).³⁸ Sin’s impact is evident at two junctures in the narrative: (1) the men of Sodom endeavored to engage in sexual sin with angels; (2) Lot vicariously offered his virgin daughters to the Sodomites to gratify their sexual desires.

Exodus and Deuteronomy

Pharaoh’s Hardened Heart. Sin’s universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God is evident in Exodus and Deuteronomy. Pharaoh’s disobedience against Yahweh in Exodus is a clear example of sin’s impact. Moses pleaded with Pharaoh on multiple occasions to release Israel from slavery (Exod 5:1–11:10). On each occasion, however, Pharaoh refused to heed Yahweh’s command delivered through Moses and Aaron. Since Yahweh hardened Pharaoh’s heart so that he would disobey (Exod 7:13–14,22; 8:19; 9:7,12,35; 10:1,20,27; 11:10; 14:8), Yahweh’s divine work in

³⁷The syntax of MT Gen 19:4 is emphatic: אנשי סדם נסבו על־הבית מנער ועד־זקן כל־העם מקצה. אנשי סדם נסבו ויאנשי העיר. The author positions the subject אנשי (“men”) first in the clause. He places an appositional construction אנשי סדם (“men of Sodom”) after the subject, and he delays the main verb נסבו (“they surrounded”) after the subject and after the appositional phrase. In addition, the author adds three more phrases that further describe the subject ויאנשי. The first two phrases form the prepositional phrase מנער ועד־זקן (“from young and to old”). The last prepositional phrase that references the subject is כל־העם (“all people”), which is in apposition to the subject ויאנשי. Finally, the prepositional phrase מקצה (“from all sides”) adds further emphasis to the sentence since the author delays the preposition until the end of the sentence and since he separates the preposition from the verb that it modifies by several phrases. Thus, in this clause the author accentuates the gross sin of the Sodomites with an emphatic syntactical construction.

³⁸See LXX Gen 19:5–8.

Pharaoh's life was the foundation of his disobedience. Nevertheless, Pharaoh's disobedience also demonstrates sin's impact on humankind since Exodus states that Pharaoh hardened his own heart against Yahweh's word (Exod 8:32).

Israel in the Wilderness: Grumbings Against Moses. Israel's constant disobedience in the wilderness demonstrates sin's universal impact on humankind's relationship with God. Yahweh showed Israel his power by inflicting Egypt with various plagues (Exodus 5–11), by delivering the Israelites from slavery (Exodus 12–13), and by destroying Pharaoh and his army in the sea (Exodus 14). Immediately, after Yahweh delivered Israel from slavery and destroyed Pharaoh in the sea (Exod 12:33–14:31), Israel sang a song of praise to Yahweh (Exod 15:1–21). Nevertheless, as the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness without food and shelter, the people grumbled against Moses (Exod 16:2). They accused him of bringing them out of Egypt in order to kill them (Exod 16:3).

Sin and thus spiritual stubbornness caused Israel to grumble against Moses. This point is supported by the Israelites' attack against Moses. Israel's attack against him was an attack against Yahweh himself since Moses led the people out of Egypt as Yahweh instructed him (see Num 11:1; 12:1–9). As Moses and Israel journeyed through the wilderness, the people again grumbled against Moses because they did not have any water (Exod 17:1–2). The people accused Moses of leading them out of Egypt in order to kill them in the wilderness (Exod 17:3).

Israel's spiritual stubbornness is further evident when the spies returned to give a report about the land (Num 13:25–33). The spies informed the people that they could not possess the land because its inhabitants were too many for Israel to overcome (Num 13:32–33). Consequently, Israel cried out to Yahweh and wept (Num 14:1). The sons of Israel subsequently "murmured" against Moses and Aaron (Num 14:1; see 16:11,41); they wished that they were still in Egypt (Num 14:2); they accused Yahweh of wanting to bring them into the promised land to kill them (Num 14:3); and they expressed that they would rather return to Egypt than enter the promised land (Num 14:3).

Israel became bitter. The people desired to stone Moses and Aaron (Num 14:10). Yahweh's response to Moses' prayer reveals

that the people's grumbings did not simply involve their questioning of Moses' and Aaron's leadership. Rather, the people were rejecting Yahweh and refusing to trust him: "And the Lord said to Moses: How long will this people reject me? How long will they not trust in me, in all of the signs that I have done in their midst?" (Num 14:11). Israel responded this way on account of their rebellious hearts (see Num 14:9). The people's response can *only* be accredited to their sin (Num 14:18–19), which is a direct corollary of the disobedience of Adam and Eve.

The Golden Calf. The Golden Calf incident also demonstrates sin's impact upon humankind. In Exod 19:3, Moses went up Mount Sinai to converse with God. During most of the time covered in Exod 19:3–32:19, Moses was on Mount Sinai, receiving Yahweh's law for the people. Because of Moses' delay, the people became restless (Exod 32:1).³⁹ They summoned Aaron to make a god for them who would lead them through the wilderness (Exod 32:1). Aaron appeased the people's request. He created for them a golden calf from the jewelry that they acquired while enslaved in Egypt (Exod 32:2–4). Once Aaron constructed the calf, the people proclaimed: "These are your gods, Israel, who caused you to come up from the land of Egypt" (Exod 32:4).⁴⁰ Aaron encouraged the people to worship the calf although they should have directed this worship only to Yahweh (Exod 32:5–6; see Exod 20:3–6). Aaron built an altar before the golden calf (Exod 32:5), held a feast in its honor (Exod 32:5), and allowed the people to bring burnt offerings and peace offerings to it (Exod 32:5).

Israel's worship of the calf was idolatry. The people's idolatry violated the first and second commandments (see Exod 20:1–6). The people broke their covenant with Yahweh, the covenant they had promised to honor without hesitation (see Exodus 24). Exodus 32:7–8 confirms sin's impact on Israel by mentioning that Yahweh tells Moses that Israel "has acted wickedly" and that the people have turned aside from obeying him to worship false gods. In Exod 32:9

³⁹This delay refers to the time between Exod 24:18, when Moses returned to Yahweh for 40 days and 40 nights, and 32:19, when Moses returned to the camp.

⁴⁰So MT and LXX of Exod 32:4. MT: אלה אלהיך ישראל אשר העליך מארץ מצרים ("these are your gods, O Israel, which caused you to come up from the land of Egypt"). LXX: οὗτοι οἱ θεοί σου Ἰσραηλ οἵτινες ἀνεβίβασάν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου ("these are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt").

Yahweh further reveals the stubbornness of Israel's spiritual heart when he states that they are a "stiff-necked people."

The Historical Books

Joshua

The Sin of Achan. Achan's sin demonstrates sin's universal impact on humankind. When Israel crossed the Jordan and conquered Jericho (Joshua 1–5), the Israelites burned the city, plundered the treasures of Jericho, and put them in the house of the Lord (Josh 6:24). Jericho was under a ban (Josh 6:17–19). Under Joshua's orders, Israel was expected to burn the city, spare Rahab and her family, and put the treasures of Jericho in the Lord's treasury (Joshua 6). Nevertheless, Achan disobeyed the stipulations of the ban. He sinned against the Lord and thus invoked Yahweh's judgment upon the people: "Achan took [some things] from under the ban" (Josh 7:1; see 7:20–21). Achan himself attested that by his actions, he "sinned against Yahweh" (Josh 7:20). The punishment for Achan's sin was physical death (Josh 7:24–25). His disobedience was sin. His sin resulted from the universal impact of Adam's sin upon humanity.

Judges

Rebellion in the Promised Land. When Israel entered the promised land, Joshua did not lead the people to conquer all of the territories of the land (Judges 1). The angel of the Lord rebuked the Israelites for not keeping themselves separate from the land's inhabitants. He asserted that the people disobeyed Yahweh (Judg 2:1–4; esp. 2:2). After Joshua's generation died, Israel further sinned against Yahweh by serving pagan gods (Judg 2:11). According to Judg 2:12, "They forsook Yahweh, the God of their fathers, who caused them to come out from the land of the Egyptians, and they went forth after other gods, from the gods of the people who surround them, and they worshipped them, and they vexed Yahweh." Judges 2:13 succinctly reiterates 2:12: "They forsook Yahweh, and they served Baal and the Ashtaroth." With the exception of a few faithful followers of Yahweh (e.g., Deborah, Gideon, and Samson), the book of Judges is a story about Israel's rebellion against Yahweh and his judgment of the nation (Judg 3:5–8,12; 4:1; 21:25).

1–2 Samuel

Saul. Sin's impact on humankind's relationship with God is evident from the life of Saul; his relationship to God affected the Israelites. Saul had a great beginning but a tragic end. He was a handsome Benjaminite (1 Sam 9:1–2), he was Israel's first king (1 Sam 9:15–16; 10:17–24; 15:1), and he defeated Israel's enemies (e.g., 1 Samuel 11; 14:47–52). Nevertheless, he often disobeyed Yahweh and Samuel, Yahweh's prophet.

Saul's digression is especially seen toward the end of his life. In 1 Samuel 15, Yahweh commanded Saul through Samuel to destroy Amalek and all of his possessions on account of his dealings with Israel (1 Sam 15:1–3). Saul only partially obeyed this command. He ambushed the Amalekites (1 Sam 15:6), but he spared the Kenites (1 Sam 15:6) and Agag, the king of the Amalekites (1 Sam 15:8–9). Saul's actions might at first appear to be acts of mercy toward those whom he spared. Nevertheless, Samuel's response to Saul suggests that Saul sinned against Yahweh. Yahweh said that he regretted that he had made Saul king: "for he has turned from after me, and he has not caused my word to rise" (1 Sam 15:11). Samuel later states that Saul's actions were evil (1 Sam 15:19). Samuel's other statements imply that Saul was rebellious and insubordinate because he rejected Yahweh's word (1 Sam 15:23). After Samuel rebuked Saul, Saul responded, saying "I have sinned because⁴¹ I have transgressed the mouth of Yahweh and your words, because I feared the people and listened to their voice" (1 Sam 15:24).

Samuel tells Saul that he "has rejected the word of Yahweh" (1 Sam 15:25). Consequently, "Yahweh will reject" him as Israel's king (1 Sam 15:26). On more than one occasion in 1 Samuel, the author states that an "evil spirit of Yahweh" came upon Saul (1 Sam 16:14–15; 18:10; 19:9; see 16:16,23).⁴² Saul's constant disobedience of Yahweh throughout his kingship displays the power of evil over him and the impact of sin in his life. Saul failed to protect Israel from Goliath (1 Samuel 17). He spent most of his kingship relentlessly pursuing David's life (1 Sam 18:10–19; 19:2; 24:1–22;

⁴¹I understand the כי-clause, *כי־עברתי את־פִּי־יְהוָה ואת־דְּבַרְךָ*, ("because I have passed over the mouth of Yahweh and your word") in 1 Sam 15:24 in a causal sense. It states the reason that Saul asserts he has sinned. The second כי-clause, *כי־יראתי את־הָעָם וְאָשַׁמְעָם בְּקוֹלָם*, ("because I have feared the people, and I listened to their voice") states the reason that Saul sinned against Yahweh.

⁴²First Samuel 16:14 especially states that "the Spirit of Yahweh turned away from Saul!"

26:1–25), and he sought the spiritual aid of the occult rather than the help of Yahweh (1 Sam 28:1–25).

David. Sin's universal impact on humankind's relationship with God is evident from David's life. David's kingship is not as tragic as the kingship of Saul. In fact, a canonical reading of David's life suggests that he was a man of great faith (see Heb 11:32–33). Nevertheless, certain aspects of David's life are devastating and reveal sin's universal reign over human beings (see Romans 6). The chief example of the impact of sin in David's life is his affair with Bathsheba. Unlike Saul, he eventually repented of this sin (2 Samuel 12; Psalm 51). By repenting, he demonstrated that he was genuinely devoted to Yahweh. Still, the narrative indicates sin's impact on David.

First, David committed adultery with and impregnated Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:1–5). Second, David attempted to cover up his sin by summoning Uriah from war (2 Sam 11:6). Third, David sought to persuade Uriah to abandon his military responsibilities and sleep with his wife during the time of war in order to cover up David's sexual sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:8–13). Fourth, David executed Uriah by placing him on the frontlines of war (2 Sam 11:14–17). Fifth, the author concludes the narrative in 2 Sam 11:27 with the following words: "But the thing that David had done was evil in the eyes of Yahweh."

1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles

Solomon and the Divided Kingdom. Sin's impact on humankind's relationship with God can be seen through the lives of the various kings who succeeded David. When David died, his son Solomon assumed the kingship (1 Kgs 1:38–53). Solomon brought much success to the kingdom (e.g., the construction of the temple [1 Kings 6–8]). Nevertheless, as with David, sin impeded Solomon's reign and brought devastating consequences upon the kingdom.

As he blessed Solomon's father, Yahweh blessed Solomon's reign. He blessed Solomon with wisdom (1 Kgs 3:16–28), royal officials (1 Kgs 4:1–19), wealth (1 Kgs 4:20–34; 2 Chr 1:14–17; 2 Chr 8:13–30), alliances with other kings (1 Kgs 5:1–12), and a successful construction of the temple (1 Kgs 6:1–8:66; 2 Chr 2:1–7:10). The demise, however, of the Solomonic kingdom began when

Solomon married many foreign women (1 Kgs 11:1). Yahweh commanded Solomon to obey his law and to walk faithfully before him (1 Kgs 9:4). Yahweh likewise warned Solomon that if he disobeyed him by breaking the covenant, he would expel Israel from the land (1 Kgs 9:6–7). Yahweh’s covenantal stipulations included a prohibition against idolatry (1 Kgs 9:6). Solomon broke the covenant by marrying foreign women who worshipped other gods and turned his heart away from Yahweh to their gods (1 Kgs 11:4–13).

Solomon’s sin divided the kingdom between Israel and Judah (e.g., 1 Kgs 12:16–24). Many of the people in both the northern and southern parts of the kingdom rebelled against Yahweh. First Kings–2 Chronicles record the spiritual decline of the kingdom and the apostasy of the kingship. Conflict arose both within and outside Solomon’s kingdom on account of Solomon’s sin. Yahweh raised up adversaries against Israel (1 Kgs 11:14–25). Those within Solomon’s own house rebelled against Israel (1 Kgs 11:26–40). Furthermore, virtually all of the kings who succeeded Solomon were evil and rebelled against Yahweh.⁴³ They practiced idolatry (1 Kgs 12:1–15:3 [2 Chr 10:1–19], 26,34; 22:51–53; 2 Kgs 3:2–3), committed various sorts of evil in the sight of Yahweh (1 Kgs 16:7,30–32; 2 Kgs 13:2; 15:8–9,17–18,23–24,27–28; 16:1–2; 21:1–9,19–22; 23:31–32; 24:8–9; 2 Chr 11:14–17), and led the kingdom away from following Yahweh (2 Kgs 17:7–23).⁴⁴

The Prophets

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Sin’s universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God is evident in the prophets. Isaiah and Jeremiah warned the people of Israel and Judah they would go into exile because of their sin. Isaiah stated that Israel was a sinful nation, whose people were weighed down with iniquity and whose offspring did evil and acted corruptly (Isa 1:4). Isaiah also stated that Israel abandoned Yahweh, despised him, and turned from him (Isa 1:4; 65:1–3). Isaiah even called Israel a harlot on account of the nation’s spiritual infidelity (Isa 1:21).

⁴³Similar to the judges Gideon, Deborah, and Samson, a few kings (e.g., Josiah, Hezekiah, etc.) obeyed Yahweh. For the most part, the kings and the people within the divided kingdom forsook Yahweh. For example, see 1 Kings–2 Chronicles.

⁴⁴For further details regarding Israel’s sin, see 2 Chronicles.

Likewise, Jeremiah proclaimed that evil had overtaken the nation (Jer 2:3) and that it did not walk in accordance with Yahweh's stipulations (Jer 2:2–37). Jeremiah called Israel a spiritual harlot and a spiritual adulteress because the people disobeyed Yahweh (Jer 3:6–10).⁴⁵ Ezekiel's prophesy came to him when the nation was in exile because of its sin (Ezek 1:1–3). Through Ezekiel, Yahweh informed the nation that he would judge the kingdom because of the nation's sin against him (Ezek 5:1–7:19). Israel defiled the temple (Ezek 7:20) and endorsed evil (Ezek 11:2). Even the nation's religious leaders were corrupt. The prophets were false prophets (Ezek 13:2), the elders were idolaters (Ezek 14:1–11; see 22:1–31), and the religious shepherds were faithless (Ezek 34:1–10).

The Book of the Twelve. Sin's impact on humankind's relationship with God is also evident in The Book of the Twelve. Hosea depicts Israel as a spiritual harlot since the nation had committed spiritual infidelity against Yahweh. Hosea specifically connects the nation's sin to Adam: "And they, as Adam, have transgressed the covenant" (Hos 6:7). Amos states that Yahweh will judge the nation because of its transgression (Amos 2:6). Amos again states that Yahweh will judge the nation for its iniquities (Amos 3:3). Obadiah suggests that Yahweh will judge Edom because of its sin. Jonah and Nahum suggest that Yahweh will judge Nineveh on account of its sin. Micah speaks of those who scheme iniquity (Micah 2:1). Habakkuk laments before Yahweh about the iniquity that surrounds him (see Hab 1:3). Joel and Malachi speak of the day of Yahweh, a day when he will judge sin.

Sin Has Broken Humankind's Relationship with One Another

Genesis

Cain and Abel. The sin of Adam and Eve severed humankind's relationships with one another. Multiple biblical texts support this break. The author of Genesis first demonstrates that sin has broken human relationships by recording the hostility that existed between Cain and Abel, the physical offspring of Adam and Eve, who introduced sin into God's good creation. After God rejected

⁴⁵For Jeremiah's lament over Israel's condition because of the nation's sin, see Lamentations.

Cain's offering (Gen 4:1–8), Cain murdered his brother because he was jealous of God's acceptance of Abel's offering. Genesis 4:5–6 confirms Cain's jealousy: "Cain became exceedingly angry, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said to Cain: 'Why have you become angry, and why has your countenance fallen?'"

The words "sin lies at the door" (Gen 4:7, see also MT Gen 4:13) suggest that Cain's actions toward his brother resulted from sin. A canonical reading of Gen 4:7 demonstrates that Cain's actions resulted from sin since Heb 11:4 suggests that God accepted Abel's offering because he offered it in faith. Hebrews 11:4 implies that God rejected Cain's offering because he sinned when he did not offer it in faith, for whatever is not done in faith is sin (see Rom 14:23). Cain's jealousy resulted in murder. Genesis 4:8*b* records this tragic event: "And it happened when they were in the field that Cain arose against Abel, his brother, and killed him."

The Tower of Babel. The tower of Babel in Genesis 11 likewise demonstrates that sin shattered human relationships. In Gen 11:1, human beings spoke a universal language. Nevertheless, human beings conspired to build a city and a tower that would reach the heavens in order to make a name for themselves (Gen 11:4). God confused humankind's language and scattered the people since they used its universal language to rebel against God (Gen 11:1–9; see Rom 1:18–32).⁴⁶

Genesis 11:3–9 confirms that sinful aspirations had motivated the people to construct this city and tower. (1) Human beings said to one another, "Let us build *for us* a city and a tower," and "Let us make *for us* a name, lest we scatter on the face of all the earth" (Gen 11:4; see 11:3). (2) God said that humankind would use this one language to succeed in whatever it desires (Gen 11:6). Since human beings endeavor in Gen 11:3–4 to make a name for *themselves* and since God judges human beings in Gen 11:7–9 by confusing their speech, one can infer from 11:6 that humankind would have used its universal language to accomplish atheistic aspirations.⁴⁷ (3) God judges humankind by confusing its speech and scattering the people throughout the earth (Gen 11:6–9). Different dialects resulted from sin, and these dialects brought universal divisions

⁴⁶Ironically, the name that the people built for themselves is characterized by confusion. See J. Ellul, *The Meaning of the City* (trans. D. Pardee; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 18.

⁴⁷I use the term *atheistic* as a reference to actions that are against God.

among humankind on account of linguistic confusion. Therefore, sin produced dialectical and cultural divisions among human beings.

Abraham. Genesis 13 demonstrates that sin has broken humankind's relationship with one another. God establishes a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12. In essence, God told Abraham to leave his country, his relatives, and his father's house (Gen 12:1). God then promised Abraham that he would bless him, make him a great nation, and bless all of the nations of the world through him (Gen 12:2–3).

Abraham left his homeland. He took Sarah, Lot, and their possessions with him. He journeyed first to the land of Canaan and then to Egypt (Gen 12:4–20). When they approached Egypt, Abraham solicited Sarah, his wife, to lie about their marriage to the Egyptians. Since she was beautiful, Abraham feared that the Egyptians would see Sarah's beauty, kill him, and take her to Pharaoh's house (Gen 12:11–16). This story demonstrates that sin has broken human relationships in at least two ways: (1) Abraham *lied* to his fellow man regarding his relationship with Sarah. (2) Abraham believed that the *Egyptians would kill him* unless he lied.

Abraham and Lot. Genesis 13–14 demonstrates that sin has broken humankind's relationship with one another by the separation of Abraham and Lot. Abraham and Lot journeyed from the Negev to Bethel (Gen 13:1,3). Abraham was very rich in livestock, gold, and silver (Gen 13:2). Lot had many flocks, herds, and tents (Gen 13:5). Consequently, "the land could not carry them, because their possessions were much, and they were not able to dwell together" (Gen 13:3–6, esp. 13:6).

Subsequently, Gen 13:7 states a disagreement: "And a dispute came between the shepherds of the possession of Abram and between the shepherds of the possession of Lot." This "dispute" between the two parties was a quarrel of some sort, which the MT's ריב ("quarrel") and the LXX's μάχη ("quarrel") support.⁴⁸ Genesis 13:4–6 suggests that the paucity of the land led to Abraham and Lot's separation in Gen 13:7. Nevertheless, sin was the central reason Abraham's and Lot's shepherds disputed with each other.

⁴⁸See the uses of these terms in MT Exod 13:1–7, esp. 13:7, and in LXX Gen 13:7; Josh 4:13; and Judg 11:25.

Genesis 14 further demonstrates sin's impact on human relationships. Genesis 14:1–16 records that a war arose between competing kings and nations (Gen 14:1–3).⁴⁹ War implies that hostility and enmity existed between these kings who fought against one another in battle. Certain kings joined with Chedorlaomer in battle against other nations, but they eventually rebelled against him (Gen 14:4). Nevertheless, Chedorlaomer and his allies defeated the kings of the other nations (Gen 14:5–9). Chedorlaomer and his allies took all of the possessions and food from Sodom and Gomorrah and departed. They also captured Lot and his possessions (Gen 14:12).

A fugitive of the war reported to Abraham that his nephew Lot had been captured. Abraham mounted up forces for battle to seize the armies who captured his nephew in war (Gen 14:13–14). Abraham and his men successfully conquered these kings and rescued Lot and his possessions (Gen 14:15–16). The recorded events, that is, war, rebellion, and seizure of goods, demonstrate that sin has broken human relationships since war, murder, betrayal, and the plundering of one's goods express that enmity existed between human beings.

Jacob and Esau. Genesis 27 supports that human relationships were broken because of sin. Genesis 27 records that Jacob stole Esau's birthright. Esau was the firstborn son and the rightful heir of his father's blessing (Gen 27:1). Nevertheless, when Isaac, the father of Jacob and Esau, became old, he was unable to see (Gen 27:2). Sensing the day of his death was near,⁵⁰ Isaac ordered Esau to prepare a dish for him so that he would in turn receive his father's blessing (Gen 27:3–4). Rebekah, Jacob's mother, was listening at the door to Isaac's discussion with Esau (Gen 27:5). She and Jacob worked together to steal Esau's birthright (Gen 27:6–29). To ac-

⁴⁹Genesis 14:1–3 states that Amraphel (king of Shinar), Arioch (king of Ellasar), Chedorlaomer (king of Elam), and Tidal (king of Goiim) made war against Bera (king of Sodom), Birsha (king of Gomorrah), Shinab (king of Admah), Shemeber (king of Zeboiim), and Bela (king of Zoar).

⁵⁰The words "Behold! I have become old; I do not know the day of my death" should be interpreted idiomatically to mean that Isaac did not know exactly when he would die although he sensed that his death was near. This reading makes sense in light of Isaac's reference to old age. In addition, Isaac's reference to his death in Gen 27:4 supports the preceding interpretation: ". . . and make for me tid-bits, just as I have loved, and bring [them] to me so that I can eat [them], so that my soul would bless you before I will die." Isaac did not know when he would die, but he sensed that death was near.

compish this feat, Rebekah convinced Jacob to disguise himself as his brother by putting on Esau's best garments (Gen 27:15). Since Esau was hairy and since Isaac could not see (Gen 25:25; 27:1), Rebekah also placed goat skin on Jacob's hands and neck so that Isaac would think that Jacob was Esau (Gen 27:16). She gave Jacob the tidbits that Isaac requested from Esau (Gen 27:17).

Their plan worked (Gen 27:21–27a). Isaac thought that Jacob was Esau when he approached his father with his meal. Thus, Isaac gave Jacob Esau's blessing (Gen 27:27–29). Esau eventually returned with his father's dish to discover that Jacob had stolen his birthright (Gen 27:30–38). Consequently, Gen 27:41 states that Esau "treated Jacob as an enemy" and that he desired to kill his brother Jacob. Jacob's deception of his father, his stealing of Esau's birthright, and Esau's emotional response toward Jacob demonstrate that sin has significantly damaged humankind's relationship with one another.

Joseph. Genesis 37–50 demonstrates that sin has broken human relationships. Jacob was the father of several sons. Jacob "loved Joseph, the youngest, more than any of his sons" (Gen 37:3). Jacob's love for Joseph aroused such hatred in his brothers' hearts that they did not speak peacefully to Joseph (Gen 37:4). The brothers' hatred toward Joseph motivated them to plot to kill him (Gen 37:20).

Convinced by Reuben that they should not kill Joseph (Gen 37:22), his brothers instead sold him into slavery (Gen 37:28). Joseph was taken into Egypt as a slave, where God used him profoundly until his death, especially in the courts of Pharaoh (Gen 37:28–36; 39:1–50:25). Sufficient for my position in Genesis 37–50 is the brothers' response to Jacob's love for Joseph. They hated him and did not speak peacefully to him (Gen 37:4). Some of them wanted to kill him (Gen 37:20; see 4:8). The way that the brothers dealt with Joseph elucidates that sin has broken human relationships.

Exodus and Deuteronomy

Slavery. Genesis 50:26 states that Joseph died in Egypt at the age of 110 years old. When he died, many of his descendants were in Egypt with him (Exod 1:1–5). Although Joseph's entire

generation eventually died (Exod 1:6), the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased in number (Exod 1:7). A new king arose in Egypt, who did not know Joseph or his descendants (Exod 1:8–10). He feared that the sons of Israel would multiply to the point that the Israelites' power would surpass that of the Egyptians (Exod 1:8–10). Thus, the king forced the Israelites into slavery and inflicted them with hard labor (Exod 1:11). The Israelites' labor did not impede their fertility, but rather enhanced it (Exod 1:12). Israel's continued growth caused the Egyptians to fear the sons of Israel (Exod 1:12). As a result, Egypt rigorously oppressed Israel with more hard labor (Exod 1:13–14). Egypt also attempted to kill Israel's male children at birth (Exod 1:15–16,22). Slavery and the attempted murder of the Israelite boys demonstrate that sin has broken human relationships.

Murder and Strife. Murder and strife in Exodus 2 further demonstrate that sin has broken human relationships. Moses grew up in Pharaoh's court (Exod 2:1–10). When he became an adult, Moses observed the labors of his Hebrew brothers and saw an Egyptian "striking" (מכה) a Hebrew (Exod 2:11). Without hesitation, Moses "killed" (רַחַץ) the Egyptian and buried him in the sand (Exod 2:12; see 2:14).⁵¹ On a subsequent day Moses observed two Hebrews quarreling with each other and one of them striking the other (Exod 2:13). Murder and strife in this text show that sin has damaged human relationships.

Ordinances for the People. The ordinances that God prescribed for his people in the Pentateuch demonstrate that sin has broken humankind's relationship with one another. The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and in Deuteronomy 5 support this assertion. Commandments 5 to 10 especially highlight the ways human beings should treat one another. While these commandments are prophylactic in nature, they nevertheless assume dysfunctional human relationships since the commandments were given to prevent Jews from treating one another in ways that would dishonor the God who had delivered them from Egypt.

⁵¹The participle (מכה "striking") in Exod 2:11 and the verb רַחַץ ("to kill") in Exod 2:12 are from the same root and lexical form, and both verbal forms are in the Hiphil stem. Thus, the Egyptian could have offered death blows to the Hebrew slave just as Moses offered a death blow to the Egyptian. Nevertheless, the text is not clear that the Egyptian killed the Hebrew slave, while it is clear that Moses murdered the Egyptian (Exod 2:14).

The fifth commandment was given to prevent Israelite children from dishonoring their parents (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16). The sixth commandment was given to prevent Israelites from murdering their fellow man (Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17; 22:13–30; see Genesis 4). The seventh commandment was given to prevent Israel from committing sexual sin (Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18; see Lev 20:10–14, 20–21; Num 5:11–22). The eighth commandment was given to prevent Israel from taking the property and possessions of another (Exod 20:15; Deut 5:18). The ninth commandment was given to prevent Israel from falsely accusing a neighbor (Exod 20:16; Deut 5:20). The tenth commandment was given to prevent the Israelites from pining after their neighbor's possessions, including their wives, homes, and livestock (Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21).

Exodus 21–23 offers more prescriptions the Israelites were expected to use to order their life. Many of these prescriptions assume a broken relationship between fellow men. Exodus 21:1–11 prescribes ordinances for Hebrew slaves. While it is true that Jews did not practice the buying and freeing of Hebrew slaves in the same way, for the same reasons, or for the same purposes as the Egyptians did, the Jewish slave trade still elucidates that sin shattered human beings' relationship with one another since no form of slavery existed until after the sin of Adam and Eve.

In addition, Yahweh's prescriptions for personal injuries and disputes (Exod 21:12–36; Deut 25:1–3; see Lev 24:17–23), property rights (Exod 22:1–15; Deut 22:1–4), virgins (Exod 22:16–17), sorcery (Exod 22:18), bestiality (Exod 22:19; Lev 20:15–16), strangers (Exod 22:21), widows and orphans (Exod 22:22–24), the poor (Exod 22:25; 23:3; Lev 25:35–55), and a neighbor's cloak (Exod 22:26–27) assume that sin has broken humankind's relationship with one another. Also, Yahweh's prescriptions for false testimony (Exod 23:1), injustice (Exod 23:2,6), dispute with the poor (Exod 23:3), a neighbor's property (Exod 23:4–5), false charges and the slaughtering of the innocent (Exod 23:7; Lev 20:2–5), bribes (Exod 23:8), oppression (Exod 23:9), and divorce (Deut 24:1–5) likewise suggest that human beings' relationship with one another has been broken since these laws assume that they could possibly wrongfully treat one another. The Israelites needed the above prophylactic prescriptions to prevent them from sinning against one another

since the sin of Adam and Eve had universally marred humankind's relationship with one another.⁵²

The Historical Books

Judges. The historical books demonstrate that sin has damaged humankind's relationship with one another. Nevertheless, because of limited space, summarizing the story of the concubine who was raped and cut into pieces (Judges 19) must suffice. The message of Judges quite simply is "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" when Israel was without a king (Judg 21:25). The nation was recalcitrant toward Yahweh. Israel's recalcitrance is seen most vividly in Judges 19.

A Levite's concubine practiced harlotry and then abandoned him for her father's house for a period of four months (Judg 19:2). The Levite pursued his wife at her father's house (Judg 19:3). Since his concubine's father was glad to see his son-in-law, he welcomed him into his home (Judg 19:4). During a period of three days, the concubine's husband and her father ate and drank together (Judg 19:4). The concubine's husband hastened to depart from the house of his father-in-law (Judg 19:5). After much persuasion from the latter, her husband remained with his father-in-law for a longer period of time (Judg 19:5-9).

The Levite and his concubine finally departed (Judg 19:10). As they traveled, they found a place to stay overnight in an Israelite city with a man who took them in for the night (Judg 19:10-21). As they lodged for the night, "wicked men" surrounded the house and requested to have sexual relations with the Levite man (Judg 19:22; see Genesis 19). The impact of sin on human relationships is evident since these men desired a homosexual relationship with a man, a relationship God did not create man to have (see Genesis 1-2; 19; Rom 1:18-32). That humankind's relationship with one another is broken because of sin is further elucidated when the owner of the house offered his virgin daughters and the Levite's concubine to gratify the sexual proclivities of these men (Judg 19:24). When these evil men did not accept his offer, the man⁵³

⁵²Human sacrifice in Num 25:1-9 and in 31:1-24 also demonstrates that sin has severely damaged humankind's relationship with fellow man.

⁵³The text is not clear whether the old man or the Levite set the concubine outside for the men to do with her whatever they pleased.

seized the concubine and set her outside of the door so that these men could do to her whatever they pleased (Judg 19:24–25).

The context (Judg 19:22) provides support for concluding that the verb ידע “to know” (נרעני in 19:22 and ידו in 19:25) means that these evil men satisfied their sexual appetites with the Levite’s concubine. Also, the occurrence of the verb עלל (“to vex” or “to practice wantonness”) in the Hithpael stem in Judg 19:25 suggests that these evil men did not simply engage in a gentle sexual relationship with the concubine. Instead, each one sexually had his way with her and so possibly gang-raped her. Thus, translations such as the New American Standard Bible correctly use the word “rape” in this verse. The phrase כִּלְהִלְיָהּ עַד־בֹּקֶר (“all night until morning”) suggests that these evil men perpetually had sex with her and made her a spectacle of ridicule, especially since every occurrence of the MT’s use of עלל in the Hithpael stem refers to ridicule and insult: Exod 10:2; Num 22:29; 1 Sam 6:6; 31:4; and 1 Chr 10:4. The LXX’s rendering of the Hithpael of עלל as ἐμπαίζω, which means “ridicule,” “make fun of,” “trick,” or “deceive,” in the five preceding texts also supports that the evil men subjected the concubine to perpetual ridicule since it translates the Hithpael of עלל as ἐμπαίζω (“ridicule, make fun of, trick, deceive”).⁵⁴ The Levite’s response to the rape of his concubine also indicates that sin has shattered human relationships. The Levite awoke the next morning and took her away without any concern for her well-being (Judg 19:27). When he arrived at his home, he took a knife, cut her into twelve pieces, and distributed the pieces among the twelve territories of Israel (Judg 19:29). The Levite’s actions, unprecedented amongst Israelites (Judg 19:30), were the result of sin and prove that sin has shattered humankind’s relationship with one another.

The Pauline Corpus: Sin Has Broken Humankind’s Relationship with God

Romans

Universal Condemnation. That sin has broken human beings’ relationship with God is evident in the Pauline corpus. Paul argues in Rom 1:18–3:20 and in 3:23 that all humankind (both Jews and

⁵⁴Some of the above LXX texts have the verb ἐνπαίζω instead of ἐμπαίζω. Both verbs mean “to ridicule.” They simply have different prefixes.

Gentiles) have sinned and consequently stand condemned before God.⁵⁵ Paul first demonstrates the impact of the disobedience of Adam and Eve on humankind and thus sin's impact in severing humankind's relationship with God in Rom 1:18: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness."⁵⁶ "For" (γὰρ) in Rom 1:18a connects Rom 1:18–32 with Rom 1:16–17.⁵⁷ Romans 1:16–17 provides the reason that Paul is eager to preach the gospel to those in Rome (Rom 1:15): "for I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God resulting in salvation for all who believe (to the Jew first and also to the Greek), for the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith, just as it has been written: 'But the righteous one will live by faith'" (Rom 1:16–17).⁵⁸

⁵⁵Many scholars agree that Rom 1:18–3:20 comprises one unit and that the unit refers to the universal condemnation of Jews and Gentiles because of sin. For example, see C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans* (ICC; London: T&T Clark), 1:104; J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (WBC 38A; Nashville: Nelson, 1988), 1:51; D. J. Moo, *Epistle Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 91; T. R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: 1998), 77. Dunn (*Romans*, 1:54) especially suggests that Paul deliberately alludes to the Adam narratives of Genesis 2–3 in 1:19–25 to set up his argument: "it was Adam who above all perverted his knowledge of God and sought to escape the status of creature, but who believed a lie and became a fool and thus set the pattern (Adam=man) for a mankind which worshipped the idol rather than the Creator." S. K. Stowers (*A Rereading of Romans* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994], 83–85) agrees that 1:18–3:20 comprise one unit. He suggests, however, that Paul refers in 1:18–3:20 to the corruption of the non-Jewish peoples, and he calls for a reappraisal of the traditional readings of the text.

⁵⁶Against Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans*, 86–88. Stowers suggests that the "Adamic fall does not serve as the explanation for the human predicament" in pre-AD 70 Jewish literature. Instead, Stowers (*A Rereading of Romans*, 88) posits that post-AD 70 Jewish literature (e.g., 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch) displays a greater emphasis on the effects of Adam's transgression." Paul and his churches were on the other side of post-AD 70 Judaism. Nevertheless, M. D. Hooker ("Adam in Romans 1," *NTS* 6 [1959–60]: 297–306; idem, "A Further Note on Romans 1," *NTS* 13 [1966–67]: 181–83); and A. J. M. Wedderburn ("Adam in Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *Studia Biblica* 3 [ed. E. A. Livingstone; JSNTSup 3; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980], 413–30) rightly suggest that Romans 1:18–32 at least alludes to the fall narrative in Genesis 2–3.

⁵⁷So also Dunn, *Romans*, 1:54.

⁵⁸Scholars do not agree on the meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ("righteousness of God") in 1:17 (see also 3:21–26). The phrase in Rom 1:17 and 3:21–22 refers to God's saving acts and to his judgment. For a representation of my view, see Moo, *Romans*, 69–74, esp. 74, and Schreiner, *Romans*, 77–78. I discuss the meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in more detail in chapter 3. In addition, Paul's citation of Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17 is likewise intensely debated in New Testament scholarship. For recent exegesis, see M. A. Seifrid, "Paul's Use of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17: Reflections on Israel's Exile in Romans," in *History and Exegesis: New Testament Essays in Honor of Dr. E. Earle Ellis for His 80th Birthday* (ed. Sang-Won [Aaron] Son; New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 133–49; R. K. Jewett, *Romans* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 141–47.

Romans 1:18–32 is fundamentally about the revelation of God’s wrath against the unrighteousness of all who suppress his truth.⁵⁹ The word γάρ (“for”) in Rom 1:18 introduces Paul’s discussion of the revelation of God’s wrath.⁶⁰ Verse 18 works with 1:16b–17 to provide the ground for 1:16a.⁶¹ Then, Rom 1:17–18, along with Rom 1:16b, explains Paul’s reason for not being ashamed of the gospel: “for it is the power of God resulting in salvation for all who believe, to the Jew first and to the Greek, for the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith. . . . For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven.”⁶² Thus, Paul explains in Rom 1:17–18 that the gospel demonstrates God’s power by providing salvation, which includes the impartation of God’s saving righteousness by faith (Rom 1:17) and deliverance from his wrath against sin (Rom 1:18; see 3:25–26).⁶³

God’s wrath is revealed in the present age (Rom 1:18) and will also be revealed in the eschaton (Rom 2:5). The latter refers to the last day when God will pour out personal wrath (e.g., Rom 2:5,8; 3:5; 4:15; 5:9; Eph 2:3; 5:6; Col 3:6; 1 Thess 1:10; 2:16; 5:9).⁶⁴ Yet, Paul’s reference to God’s wrath in 1:18 emphasizes the presence of his personal wrath against sin in the present age.⁶⁵ Paul’s repetition

⁵⁹Stowers (*A Rereading of Romans*, 93) thinks that Paul primarily addresses his Gentile audience with his indictments in 1:18–32.

⁶⁰Cranfield (*Romans*, 1:108) suggests that the γάρ in 1:18 connects 1:18–3:20 to 1:17. In his reading, 1:18–3:20 supports that God’s righteousness is from faith, not necessarily that it is being revealed. Moo (*Romans*, 99) suggests that the γάρ in 1:18 “introduces the answer to a question implicit in what Paul has just said: Why has God manifested his righteousness and why can it be appropriated only through faith?” Understood in this light, says Moo, γάρ “introduces the entire argument of 1:18–3:20—which, indeed, is encapsulated in v. 18.”

⁶¹Recently Seifrid (“Habakkuk 2:4,” 140) suggests that 1:18 explains 1:17 rather than providing a second explanation of 1:15.

⁶²Jewett (*Romans*, 151–52) posits that the γάρ in 1:18 functions as “a marker of cause or reason” that “indicates that the discussion of wrath directly supports the thesis about the gospel in 1:16–17 rather than expressing its antithesis, describing the deplorable state of human affairs evident without the perspective of the gospel, or characterizing the era before the proclamation of grace.”

⁶³In favor of an eschatological understanding of God’s wrath in Rom 1:18, see Dunn, *Romans*, 1:54.

⁶⁴Similarly, Schreiner, *Romans*, 84. C. H. Dodd (*The Bible and the Greeks* [2nd ed.; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1954], 82–95) argued against the personal aspect of God’s wrath and thus against the view that his wrath needed appeasement. Scholars subsequent to Dodd demonstrated the weaknesses and the inaccuracies of Dodd’s claims. E.g., R. Nicole, “C. H. Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation,” *WTJ* 17 (1954–55): 117–57; L. Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 144–213; idem, “The Meaning of ΗΙΛΑΣΤΕΡΙΟΝ in Romans 3:25,” *NTS* 18 (1971–72): 3–43; D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* (SNTS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 23–48.

⁶⁵A. T. Hanson (*The Wrath of the Lamb* [London: SPCK, 1957], 84–85) altogether limits God’s wrath to the present age; he denies any eschatological aspect of God’s wrath.

of the present tense verb⁶⁶ ἀποκαλύπτω (“to reveal”) in Rom 1:17–18 and the phrase ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ (“from heaven”) in 1:18 confirm that interpretation.⁶⁷ Further, 1:17–18 supports God’s active role of revealing his righteousness and his wrath since the verb “to reveal,” (used twice) is a divine passive, since the verb παρέδωκεν (“He gave”) in 1:24,26, and 28 is in the active voice, and since God is the grammatical subject of the verbs in each of those verses. Therefore, the righteousness of God is revealed (ἀποκαλύπτεται) from faith to faith (Rom 1:17); the wrath of God is revealed (ἀποκαλύπτεται) from heaven upon all the ungodliness and the unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Rom 1:18). God gave the unrighteous over to commit various sins (1:23,24,28).⁶⁸ God is personally doing the action of the verbs in 1:17–18 and in 1:23,24, and 28.⁶⁹

Paul states both God’s reason for revealing his wrath and the ones upon whom he reveals it in Rom 1:18b: “upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth by unrighteousness.” The terms “ungodliness” (ἀσέβεια) and “unrighteousness” (ἀδικία) specifically grant insight into humankind’s spiritual

⁶⁶The above statement does not mean that the present tense verb *a priori* suggests that Paul refers in 1:18 to God’s present, abiding wrath. Context also aids in interpreting the present tense verbs in this manner.

⁶⁷H.-J. Eckstein (“Denn Gottes Zorn wird Himmel her offenbar werden: Exegetische Erwägungen zu Röm 1:18,” *ZNW* 78 [1987]: 82–89) disregards the tense of the verbs. He instead argues for a futuristic understanding of God’s wrath in 1:18.

⁶⁸Dunn (*Romans*, 1:54) suggests that γάρ provides a connection between 1:17 and 1:18, which is clear by the parallel structure of the verses: “righteousness of God for faith” (1:17) and “the wrath of God upon unrighteousness” (1:18). Jewett (*Romans*, 151) suggests that the “gospel reveals wrath, not simply by reminding of future punishment or of the inevitable process of cause and effect in a moral universe, but by indicating the culpability of the human race at so egregious a level as to make retribution morally necessary and inevitable.”

⁶⁹Against C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (Moffatt New Testament Commentary; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932), 21–24; Hanson, *Wrath*, 69, 85; G. H. C. MacGregor, “The Concept of the Wrath of God in the New Testament,” *NTS* 7 (1960–61): 101–09. For a further discussion of God’s wrath in Paul, see and compare the differences between T. Gorringer, *God’s Just Vengeance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 72; A. T. Lincoln, “From Wrath to Justification,” in *Pauline Theology: Romans* (ed. D. M. Hay and E. E. Johnson; Atlanta: SBL, 2002), 156; S. J. Gathercole, “Justified by Faith, Justified by His Blood: The Evidence of Romans 3:21–4:25,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: A Fresh Appraisal of Paul and Second Temple Judaism: The Paradoxes of Paul* (ed. D. A. Carson, P. O’Brien, and M. A. Seifrid; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 2:168. Even in 1, 2, and 4 Maccabees, texts in which God uses Antiochus Epiphanes IV to judge Israel, the authors do not hesitate to attribute the wrath of Antiochus to God’s personal judgment of the nation, although Antiochus was the agent through whom God imparted his judgment against Israel’s sin (see 1 Maccabees 1 with 2 Macc 6:12–17; 7:2–8:5).

condition,⁷⁰ for both terms are attributes of the noun ἀνθρώπων (ungodliness “of men,” unrighteousness “of men”), and both refer to evil actions committed by human beings.⁷¹ Paul’s use of the plural ἀνθρώπων (“of men,” “of mankind”) in Rom 1:18 confirms that both the universal sinfulness and the universal condemnation of humankind are in view.⁷²

Paul subsequently provides in Rom 1:19–23 the reason that God reveals his wrath against the unrighteousness of human beings: namely, idolatry.⁷³ Although humankind possesses knowledge of God, human beings do not naturally worship the true God.⁷⁴ Humankind’s failure to worship and honor God with the knowledge that he has given to it results in idolatry (Rom 1:21–23,25,27; see Jer 2:5; Wis 13:1).⁷⁵ Idolatry thus establishes the reason for the revelation of God’s wrath in Rom 1:18,24,26, and 28. The particle διό (“therefore”) supports the latter since it connects Paul’s statements regarding the reasons that God manifests his wrath against unrighteousness (Rom 1:18–23) with the manifestation of God’s wrath (Rom 1:24–32). As mentioned above, God’s wrath in the Pauline corpus is primarily eschatological (e.g., Rom 5:9). Nevertheless, Paul states here that God reveals his wrath in the present age against the ungodliness of human beings by giving the ungodly ones over to practice the desires of their rebellious hearts (Rom 1:24–32).

Romans 2–3 offers further support that humankind’s sin has severed their relationship with God. In Romans 2:1–3:20 Paul

⁷⁰For a discussion of the difference between ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία, see Jewett, *Romans*, 152. Schreiner (*Romans*, 88) rightly seems to understand these nouns as a nominal hendiadys.

⁷¹Similarly, Dunn, *Romans*, 1:55; Jewett, *Romans*, 152. I understand the genitive modifier of the above terms to be a subjective genitive.

⁷²See Jewett, *Romans*, 152. Against Stowers, *A Rereading*, 91–92.

⁷³Schreiner (*Romans*, 81–82, 85–86, 102–03) argues that 1:18 is the theme verse of 1:18–3:20. Thus, 1:18 refers to all of humankind, but Paul specifically focuses his discussion in 1:19–32 on Gentiles. Romans 2:1–3:8 specifically indicts Jews, and 3:9–20 indicts both Jews and Gentiles, so that the unit of 1:18–3:20 as a whole refers to the universal condemnation of both Jews and Gentiles. Stowers (*A Rereading of Romans*, 92) limits Paul’s indictments in 1:18–31 to Gentiles.

⁷⁴T. R. Schreiner (*New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008], 523) rightly points out that humankind’s failure to honor and glorify God constitutes sin in Pauline theology.

⁷⁵The premise that Paul only indicts Gentiles in 1:19–23 is predicated on several arguments, one of which is that Jews would not have committed many of the sins that Paul mentions in the text. Rather, these vices reflect the sins of Gentiles. See Schreiner, *Romans*, 81–82. Nevertheless, 1 Maccabees demonstrates that at least idolatry was by no means foreign to Jews during the Second Temple period.

develops the argument that God reveals his wrath upon Jews and Gentiles on account of sin and that both groups stand condemned before God in the judgment. From his argument in Romans 1:18–32, he infers in Rom 2:1–3:20 that neither Jew nor Gentile has an adequate defense before God for their sin, one which would exonerate them in God’s law court, since God’s judgment is “according to the truth” (Rom 2:2; see Rom 1:18).⁷⁶ Instead, Jews and Gentiles will be judged because of their “hardened and unrepentant heart” (Rom 2:5) since God will “give to each one accordance to his works” (Rom 2:6) regardless of ethnicity (Rom 2:7–3:8). Paul states elsewhere that Gentiles are “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1,5), and they live ungodly and immoral lives as a result (Eph 2:2–3).⁷⁷ Thus, the depravity of the human heart leads to radical disobedience to God, which results in the revelation of God’s righteous judgment against sin (see Rom 1:18–3:8).⁷⁸

In Rom 3:9–20 Paul infers from Rom 2:1–3:8 that human beings stand condemned before God.⁷⁹ He asks whether Jews have an advantage over Gentiles in terms of right standing before God since the latter group is not Jewish (Rom 3:9*a*). He answers with an emphatic “no” (οὐ πάντως) in Rom 3:9*b*.⁸⁰ Paul gives the reason in Rom 3:9*c* for his answer in Rom 3:9*b*: “for we accuse both Jews and Greeks, all, to be under sin.”⁸¹ That is, Jews and Gentiles are under

⁷⁶Human beings naturally reject and suppress the truth on account of the spiritual deadness of the human heart (Rom 1:18), but God judges in accordance with the truth (Rom 2:2).

⁷⁷To reject Pauline authorship of Ephesians is commonplace in New Testament scholarship. For a thorough discussion of this rejection and for arguments in favor of Pauline authorship, see H. W. Hoehner, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 2–61.

⁷⁸God’s wrath is eschatological in Romans 2.

⁷⁹So Dunn, *Romans*, 1:144–45; Moo, *Romans*, 196–210; Schreiner, *Romans*, 161. Against, however, Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans*, 176–93.

⁸⁰Paul states earlier in Rom 3:1–2 that Jews have an advantage over Gentiles. His statement in Rom 3:9 does not contradict Rom 3:1–2. Romans 3:1–2 occurs in a context in which Paul lists the privileges that Jews have over Gentiles (see Rom 2:17–18). Paul contends, however, that such ethnic and national privileges were not sufficient for a right standing before God (see Rom 2:19–29). Yet, Jewish ethnic privileges grant them an advantage over the Gentiles in that “the oracles of God were believed” by the Jews (Rom 3:2). On the other hand, notwithstanding that Jews have certain privileges, they are equally condemned before God because of their sin (see Rom 3:9–18). In this sense, Jews have no advantage over Gentiles (see Rom 3:9).

⁸¹The construction Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας (“both Jews and Greeks”) includes everyone in the known world of Paul’s time. Πάντας (“all”) is in apposition to “Jews” and “Greeks,” and it further defines the scope of Paul’s indictment. That Paul speaks of the universal condemnation of both Jews and Gentiles in 2:1–3:20 is further evident by his statement in 3:19 that “every mouth be made silent and that the entire world be answerable to God.” “Every mouth” (πάν στόμα) and “the entire world” (πᾶς κόσμος) includes both Jews

the power of sin.⁸² To bolster his statement in Rom 3:9, Paul cites a catena⁸³ of Old Testament texts in Rom 3:10–18: “There is not a righteous one, not even one. There is not one who understands. There is not one who seeks God. All have turned away; together they were debased. There is not one who practices good; there is not even one. Their throat is an opened tomb. They speak deceit with their tongues. Poison of snakes is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their paths, and they do not know the way of peace. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

The above texts refer to wicked haters of God in their original Old Testament contexts. Paul selects these verses about the wicked and applies them to humankind to illustrate the universal condemnation of humankind, which results from the universal impact of sin (see Genesis 2–3).⁸⁴ Paul’s specific allusion to Isa 59:7–8 in Rom 3:15–17 attests that sin has significantly damaged humankind’s relationship with God: “Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their paths, and they do not know the way of peace.” Isaiah 59:7–8 states: “Their feet run to evil, and they hasten to pour out the blood of the innocent. Their thoughts are thoughts of evil. Destruction and shattering are in their streets. They do not know the way of peace, and there is no judgment in their ways. They have perverted their paths. No one who walks on it knows peace.”

Isaiah 59:2 provides the reason the wicked in Isa 59:3–8 practice wickedness: “Indeed, your sins have caused a separation between you and between your God, and your sins have caused his face to hide from you, from hearing.” In other words, their sins separated them from God. Since Paul argues that sin universally impacts the entire human race in Rom 1:18–3:20 and since he

and Gentiles. It is likewise further evident from the phrase “all flesh” (πᾶσα σάρξ) in 3:20 and from the clause “all have sinned and lack the glory of God” in 3:23.

⁸²So Schreiner, *Romans*, 164.

⁸³Compare MT and LXX of Rom 3:10–12 with Pss 14:1–3; 53:1–3; Eccl 7:20, Rom 3:13 with Pss 5:9; 140:3; Rom 3:14 with Ps 10:7; Rom 3:15–17 with Isa 59:7–8; Prov 1:16, and Rom 3:18 with Ps 36:1.

⁸⁴Dunn (*Romans*, 1:149) states that “it needs to be stressed that the point of the catena is not simply to demonstrate that scripture condemns all humankind, but more precisely to demonstrate that scriptures which had been read from the presupposition of a clear distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous (see Jub 21:21–22) in fact condemned all humankind as soon as that clear distinction was undermined.” Cranfield (*Romans*, 1:191), Moo (*Romans*, 202), Schreiner (*Romans*, 164), and Jewett (*Romans*, 259–60) more accurately assert that the purpose of the catena is to support the universal impact of sin and the universal condemnation of Jews and Gentiles because of sin.

alludes to Isa 59:7–9 in a unit where he argues for the universal sinfulness of human beings (1:18–3:20), Paul’s statement that “all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23) summarizes the argument regarding the universal condemnation of humankind because of sin in Rom 1:18–3:20. Romans 3:23 thus confirms that sin produces separation from God, which results in radical disobedience against God.

Adam, Sin, Death, and Christ. In Pauline theology, Adam and Eve’s disobedience is the fundamental reason Jews and Gentiles are separated from God, sin, die, fail to honor God as he deserves, and are condemned. In other words, humankind’s “hardened” and “unrepentant heart” (Rom 2:5) results from the spiritual death produced by Adam and Eve’s disobedience (see Gen 2:17). Paul’s statements in Rom 5:12–21 discuss this understanding.

Romans 5:12–21 is part of a larger unit that begins in 5:1 and ends in 8:39.⁸⁵ The primary theme of this larger unit is hope. Romans 5:12–21 discusses the death Adam’s sin produces and the life Jesus’ obedience brings. The primary point in Rom 5:12–21 is “how Christ’s life defined the future destiny of believers just as Adam’s life defined the future of his descendants.”⁸⁶ Paul understood Adam’s disobedience would produce physical and spiritual death for everybody. This outcome is clear from the outset of Rom 5:12: “For this reason, as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men . . .” “Death” (θάνατος) in this context certainly includes physical death, for Paul states in Rom 5:14 that “death reigned from Adam until Moses.” Nevertheless, “death” here also refers to spiritual death.

The phrase “for this reason” (διὰ τοῦτο) in Rom 5:12 connects 5:13–21 with 5:1–11.⁸⁷ Paul explains in the latter unit that justification by faith guarantees tremendous hope for believers (5:1–5) and that Jesus’ death is the ground of this hope (5:6–11). Paul further discusses the hope that believers have as a result of justification

⁸⁵For examples, see A. Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. C. C. Rasmussen; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1949), 187–89; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:253–54; N. Dahl, *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 82–91; J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 83–86; D. B. Garlington, “The Obedience of Faith in the Letter to the Romans—Part 3: The Obedience of Christ and the Obedience of the Christian,” *WTJ* 55 (1993): 87–112; Schreiner, *Romans*, 245–49, et al.

⁸⁶Jewett, *Romans*, 370.

⁸⁷So also Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:271.

by faith on the basis of Jesus' death in Rom 5:12–21.⁸⁸ Paul states in Rom 5:12 that all men die since “sin entered the world through one man and death through sin.” The “one man” of Rom 5:12 refers to Adam and his disobedience in Gen 3:6 since Paul explicitly refers to Adam and his transgression throughout Rom 5:14–21 with the words “in the likeness of Adam’s transgression” (Rom 5:14), “the gift” (Rom 5:15), “the transgression” (Rom 5:15), “the transgression of the one man” (Rom 5:15–18), “judgment because of the one man” (Rom 5:16), and the “disobedience of the one man” (Rom 5:18). The relative clause of Rom 5:12*b* supports that Adam died spiritually when he sinned and that this spiritual deadness extends to the whole of humankind: ἐφ’ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον (“on the basis of which all sin”).

The latter clause in Rom 5:12*b* on account of its phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ (“in which”) has been the subject of much debate throughout the history of the church.⁸⁹ Translation options are plentiful.⁹⁰ The keys to an appropriate translation are studying the context, interpreting the theology of Romans 5, and determining the antecedent of the relative pronoun ᾧ (“which”).

Scholars have translated ᾧ as a masculine pronoun, whose antecedent is an implicit νόμος (“law”).⁹¹ Some have translated the antecedent as θάνατος (“death”).⁹² Others have understood Adam, who spread universal death to all of humankind, as the antecedent.⁹³ The latter reading suggests that because of Adam’s sin, all human beings sin. Still others have understood ᾧ as a neuter word, and they have taken the phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ as a conjunction. With this reading, the phrase could be translated as “because”⁹⁴ or “so that,”⁹⁵

⁸⁸B. J. Vickers’ (*Jesus’ Blood and Righteousness* [Wheaton: Crossway, 2006], 114) assertion is correct when he states “when he comes to the second half of chapter 5, Paul moves beyond this discussion of the sins of humanity and his discussion of faith. Perhaps it is better to say that he gets behind the issues of both sin and faith to things that explain both the reality of sin and the reality of justification by faith.”

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 125–41.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*

⁹¹So F. W. Danker, “Rom V.12: Sin under Law,” *NTS* 14 (1967–68): 428.

⁹²So R. Bultmann, “Adam and Christ according to Romans 5,” in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Otto A. Piper* (ed. and trans. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 143–65, esp. 153.

⁹³See J. Cambier, “Péchés des hommes et péchés d’Adam en Rom v. 12,” *NTS* 11 (1964–65): 246–53.

⁹⁴So Dunn, *Romans*, 1:273.

⁹⁵So J. Fitzmyer, *Romans* (ABC 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 416; *idem*, “The Consecutive Meaning of ἐφ’ ᾧ in Romans 5.12,” *NTS* (1993): 321–39.

and it would refer to humankind's participation in Adam's sin and to its inheriting his depraved nature.⁹⁶ Recently, Paul Jewett posits that ἐφ' ᾧ ("on the basis of which") refers to "the realm in which humans were sinning, that is, the κόσμος ('world') mentioned in vv. 12 and 13."⁹⁷ His reading suggests that Adam influences the fate of humankind, and human beings are responsible for their sins (see 2 Bar 54:15,19).⁹⁸

Regardless of the translation of ἐφ' ᾧ and the selection of its antecedent,⁹⁹ Paul's statements in Roman 5:15–21 indicate that he has in mind the universal impact of sin on all humankind in Rom 5:12*b*, at least at the conceptual and theological levels. Paul's argument in Rom 5:15–21 contrasts Jesus' obedience with Adam's disobedience in order to highlight the superiority of the justification achieved through Jesus' obedience over the universal condemnation of sin resulting from Adam's disobedience.¹⁰⁰ Paul first pits Adam's transgression against Jesus' gift in Rom 5:15. God's gift, provided through Jesus' obedience, will supremely abound for many since "all died because of the transgression of the one man." Since the grace and gift of God that come to humankind as a result of the obedience of the "one man" in Rom 5:15 refer to justification and eternal life (Rom 5:17), the death that all died as a result of Adam's sin must include spiritual death in Rom 5:12. Just as physical death spreads to all human beings because of Adam's sin, Adam's spiritual death likewise universally affects all human beings by shattering their relationship with God.

Romans 5:16 affirms the universal impact of sin on humankind's relationship with God. Paul states that judgment and condemnation result from Adam's sin, but God's gift results in justification. Romans 5:17 further contrasts Adam's disobedience with Jesus' obedience. By contrasting Adam's disobedience with the "righteousness" and eternal "life" that Jesus achieved through his obedience, Paul suggests that Adam's sin brought death upon human beings. Continuing Paul's initial thought in Rom 5:12,

⁹⁶This appears to be Cranfield's view (*Romans*, 1:274–79). Nevertheless, Cranfield's view is a conflation of the view that understands ἐφ' ᾧ as a conjunction and human beings as sinning in their own person since humankind has inherited Adam's sinful nature.

⁹⁷Jewett, *Romans*, 376.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹I affirm Cranfield's position, but I do not follow his explanation at every point.

¹⁰⁰Similarly, Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:270.

Rom 5:18 infers from Rom 5:15–17 that the gift of Jesus’ obedience and the curse of Adam’s disobedience are completely antithetical to one another. Paul mentions in 5:18 that “condemnation” comes to all as a result of Adam’s sin and that “justification” comes to all as a result of Jesus’ obedience. Paul reiterates this contrast in Rom 5:19 by stating that Adam’s disobedience made many sinners, and Jesus’ obedience made many righteous.¹⁰¹ Finally, Paul concludes the unit of 5:12–21 by stating in Rom 5:20–21 that the law made sin worse, grace abounded over sin through Jesus, sin abounded in death because of Adam, but grace abounded much more and resulted in eternal life through Jesus’ obedience. Thus, since Paul contrasts Adam’s disobedience with Jesus’ obedience in 5:12–21, using the words “sin,” “judgment,” “condemnation,” “justification,” “righteousness,” and “eternal life,” Adam’s disobedience resulted in both his and humankind’s death. This death shattered both his and humankind’s relationship with God.¹⁰²

Slaves of Sin. Adam’s sin had an impact on humankind since in Romans 6 Paul argues that humankind is a slave to sin and that sin reigns over human beings. Romans 6 is fundamentally about the believers’ freedom from the tyranny of sin on account of their baptism into Christ’s death; furthermore, the chapter is about the “triumph of grace over the power of sin.”¹⁰³ The inferential particle οὖν (“therefore”) reveals a connection between Romans 6 and Rom 5:12–21. The connection becomes clear from the question in 6:1: “Therefore, what will we say: should we continue in sin, so that grace would increase?”

Romans 6:1 introduces an inquiry resulting logically from the argument in Rom 5:12–21. In the latter text, Paul argues that Adam’s disobedience had produced death, but Christ’s obedience conquered the power of sin resulting from Adam’s transgression.

¹⁰¹ Bultmann (*Theology of the New Testament* [Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007], 251), arguably the most important New Testament scholar of the 20th century, wrongly asserted that Paul was influenced by gnostic thinking here. Yet, he states that Paul avoids “slipping into Gnostic thinking” since he did not assign Adam’s sin to something lying behind his disobedience (such as matter or Satan).

¹⁰² Stowers (*A Rereading of Romans*, 251–55) asserts that Paul is unconcerned in Rom 5:12–21 in demonstrating “a timeless psychology or anthropology of sin from the story of Adam’s fall.” Nevertheless, Stowers does not seriously interact with either the text of 5:12–21 or with arguments that counter his reading. Rather, he asserts that the traditional reading is unviable and commences to affirm his view.

¹⁰³ See Schreiner, *Romans*, 298–303.

Paul concludes the contrast of Christ to Adam in 5:20–21 by saying that God’s grace increased through Christ whereas sin had increased through the law. The question raised in 6:1 is built on the following four premises: (1) Adam’s disobedience introduced sin and death into the world; (2) Christ’s obedience introduced eternal life; (3) the law intensifies the severity of sin introduced to creation by the disobedience of Adam; and (4) God’s grace through Christ overcomes the intensification of sin as a result of the law. Thus, “should human beings continue in sin since God’s grace increases through Christ when sin is intensified?”

In Rom 6:2, Paul responds to this question with an emphatic “no” (μὴ γένοιτο) since believers have died to sin by dying with Christ in baptism (Rom 6:3–4). Humankind’s connection with Adam is especially seen in Rom 6:5–11 where Paul speaks of “our old man.” Romans 6:5 gives a reason believers should not live in sin so that grace will abound: namely, since believers are partakers in the likeness of Jesus’ death, they likewise will be partakers in the resurrection. Romans 6:6 provides a second reason believers should not live in sin so that grace will abound: “our old man was crucified so that the body of sin would be abolished, so that we would no longer serve sin.”

Since Rom 5:12–21 contrasts the death that came through Adam with the life that came through Christ, the “old man” refers to human beings whose spiritual condition resulted from Adam and Eve’s disobedience: that is, believers who are in Adam.¹⁰⁴ The statements in Rom 6:4–5 confirm that this condition was at least spiritual death resulting from Adam’s sin. In the latter text, Paul states that the believer’s baptism into Christ’s death results in the believer’s new resurrection-life. The phrase “old man” alludes to spiritual death in Rom 6:6 since “old man” refers to the believer’s previous identity in Adam (see Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:22) for several reasons: Paul connects the phrase “old man” with slavery to sin; he connects death with justification from sin in Rom 6:7; he connects death with life in Rom 6:8–10; he connects death to sin with life in Christ in Rom 6:11; and he connects death to the reign of sin and death in Rom 6:12–14.

¹⁰⁴Dunn, *Romans*, 1:332; Schreiner, *Romans*, 315.

Dead in Sin, Alive in Christ. Sin's impact on humankind's relationship with God is further evident from Rom 6:15–23. As in Rom 6:1, Paul anticipates a question in Rom 6:15: “Therefore, what [will we say]: should we sin because we are not under law but under grace?” This question logically follows 6:14 where Paul says that “sin will not reign over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” Thus, believers could wrongly infer that they should pursue libertinism since their dying with Christ means they are not under the law. Anticipating this question in Rom 6:15*a*, Paul responds with an emphatic “may it never be!” (μὴ γένοιτο) in Rom 6:15*b*.

In Rom 6:16–23, Paul explains his objection to the question he anticipates in Rom 6:15. He begins with a question pertaining to spiritual slavery. The question illustrates that one is a slave to whatever he obeys: “either a slave of sin resulting in death or a slave of obedience resulting in righteousness” (Rom 6:16). Paul, then, thanks God that although the Romans were slaves of sin, they yielded to the teaching and became slaves of righteousness (Rom 6:17). Romans 6:18 confirms this exegesis of Rom 6:16–17: “you were made to be slaves of righteousness, because you were freed from sin.”¹⁰⁵ In light of Rom 6:16, freedom from sin produces freedom from death, and slavery to righteousness produces slavery to eternal life.

Paul commands the Romans to be slaves of righteousness since they have died with Christ (Rom 6:19), for they were freed from righteousness (i.e., dead to sin) when they were slaves of sin (Rom 6:20). Paul states that death is the end or the goal of a life ruled by sin (Rom 6:21). The latter emphasizes spiritual death, for Paul says “but, because you have now been freed from sin and because you have been made slaves to God, you have your fruit resulting in sanctification, and [you have] the goal—namely, eternal life” (Rom 6:22).¹⁰⁶ Paul's statement in Rom 6:23 also stresses spiritual death:

¹⁰⁵I interpret ἐλευθερωθέντες (“having been freed”) as an adverbial, causal participle.

¹⁰⁶I understand τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωῆν αἰώνιον in Rom 6:22 to be a second independent clause in conjunction with the clause ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἀγιασμόν (“you have your fruit resulting in sanctification”) because τὸ τέλος (“end/goal”) and ζωῆν αἰώνιον (“eternal life”) are in the accusative case, and here δὲ (“and”) introduces a second independent clause. Paul assumes the main verb ἔχετε (“you have”) from Rom 6:22*a* with the words τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωῆν αἰώνιον in Rom 6:22*b*. A similar ellipsis occurs in Rom 3:21–22 with the verb πεφανέρωται (Rom 3:21). Technically, τὸ τέλος is the direct object of its own clause in Rom

“for the wages [i.e., the goal or end] of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Law, Sin, and Death. Romans 7 confirms the universal impact of sin on humankind’s relationship with God. This chapter is one of the most debated chapters in the letter.¹⁰⁷ The goal here, however, is not to offer a detailed exegesis of every line in the chapter.¹⁰⁸ The details of the text receive treatment only in so far as they relate to the thesis.

The fundamental issue in Romans 7 is the Mosaic law, not anthropology.¹⁰⁹ Paul demonstrates this emphasis by developing two primary arguments. First, using an analogy from marriage, he illustrates the law’s binding effect before faith in Christ (Rom 7:1–6). Second, he states that the law holds people in bondage to sin (7:7–25). Furthermore, Romans 7 is a continuation of the argument in Rom 5:12–6:23 regarding eternal death in Adam, eternal life in Christ, and freedom from sin.¹¹⁰ Paul argues in the latter unit that Adam’s disobedience produced slaves to sin, which results in death, but Christ’s obedience produces slaves of righteousness, which results in eternal life. Romans 7 thus focuses on the condemnation that comes to everyone in Adam who is under the law and outside of Christ.

Especially relevant to examining sin’s universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God is Paul’s discussion about sin in Rom 7:7–25.¹¹¹ After discussing that the presence of the law increased the power of sin (Rom 7:7–9), Paul states that “I died” and

6:22b, but its clause does not have an expressed verb since there is an ellipsis in Rom 6:22b, and ζώην αἰώνιον are in apposition to τὸ τέλος.

¹⁰⁷Similarly, Moo, *Romans*, 409. Also, Schreiner (*Romans*, 343) asserts that Romans 7 is “one of the most disputed and complex chapters in the entire letter . . .”

¹⁰⁸For a detailed exegesis of Romans 7, see the critical commentaries on Romans. Most chiefly in English scholarship, see Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:331–70; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:269–300; Moo, *Romans*, 409–67; Schreiner, *Romans*, 345–94; and (recently) Jewett, *Romans*, 428–73.

¹⁰⁹So Moo, *Romans*, 409; F. Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 364. Schreiner (*Romans*, 343) especially states that “it is generally agreed that the main issue informing the chapter is the relationship between the law and sin.” Dunn (*Romans*, 1:377) asserts that 7:7–23 is an apology for the law.

¹¹⁰Schreiner (*Romans*, 343) thinks Romans 7 harkens back to 5:20 and explains why the Mosaic law’s presence stimulates sin.

¹¹¹Romans 7:7–25 develops the motif of 7:5 (Schreiner, *Romans*, 344). Moo (*Romans*, 424), however, suggests that the main line of development flows from 7:6b to chapter 8. He labels Romans 7 a parenthesis.

that the commandment resulting in life produced “death in me” (7:10). The identity of the “I” (ἐγώ) and “in me” (ἐν ἐμοί) statements in Rom 7:7–25 are the subject of intense debate.¹¹² At least three views exist. First, “I” refers to Adam and his experience with God’s commandment in the garden of Eden.¹¹³ Second, “I” refers to Israel’s experience with Yahweh’s commandment on Sinai.¹¹⁴ Third, “I” is an autobiographical reference to Paul’s pre-Christian¹¹⁵ or Christian experience.¹¹⁶ The third option at first glance best represents the context of Rom 7:7–25 since Paul conveys an agonizing, personal tone in the text. Even so, all three positions accurately reflect the context since Paul’s discussion of the law in Romans 7 flows from his discussions about the Jewish inability to keep the law (Rom 2:1–3:20) and the universal impact of Adam’s transgressions (Rom 5:12–21).¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, the fundamental focus of the text is not to convey Paul’s personal experience, but to emphasize that sin uses the law to produce death.¹¹⁸

The “commandment” (ἐντολή) in Rom 7:8–9 likely refers to a specific stipulation within the Mosaic law since Paul uses the broader term νόμος (“law”) in Rom 7:1–10 to refer to the Mosaic covenant and mentions a specific ἐντολή (“you shall not lust”) in Rom 7:8. Since Paul was not dead physically when he wrote this statement, death in Rom 7:10 must refer to the spiritual death that the law (i.e., the Mosaic covenant) intensified when it was ratified in a person’s life and when a specific commandment in the Mosaic law was broken. Romans 7:11 supports this exegesis: “for sin deceived me, and through [the commandment]¹¹⁹ it killed [me] after it took an occasion through the commandment.”

¹¹²See Jewett, *Romans*, 440–73.

¹¹³E. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. G. W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 196; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:381.

¹¹⁴Moo, *Romans*, 427. Moo thinks that a combination of both an autobiographical reference and a reference to Israel best explains Paul’s use of ἐγώ in Rom 7:7–25.

¹¹⁵Recently, Jewett (*Romans*, 443) affirms a pre-Christian view of “I.”

¹¹⁶So Schreiner, *Romans*, 359. Schreiner (*Romans*, 364–65) admits that views one and two have viability and thus appears to agree that all three positions could accurately capture Paul’s intent in Romans 7.

¹¹⁷Similarly, Thielman, *Theology*, 363–64.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, 390. For a detailed discussion of the pre-Christian versus Christian experience, see Schreiner, *Romans*, 379–90.

¹¹⁹The word “commandment” is not in the Greek text of Rom 7:11. Commandment is a correct interpretation of the pronoun αὐτῆς (“it”) in Rom 7:11 since ἐντολῆς (“commandment”) is its antecedent.

Paul continues his discussion of the law in Rom 7:13. Based on the preceding statement in Rom 7:12 that the “law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good,” Paul argues that the good law and the holy commandment were not the fundamental sources of death (Rom 7:13). Rather, sin was the fundamental source of death, for sin “worked death through the good, so that sin would produce a sinner according to surpassing greatness through the commandment” (Rom 7:13). The “good” that sin used to produce death includes the law and the commandment, for Paul states in Rom 7:12 that “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.” Romans 7:13, therefore, affirms one of the major points in this chapter: sin has universally shattered humankind’s relationship with God. Sin used God’s law to increase the power of death and sin. Since Adam’s sin produced death for everyone and since only Christ provides spiritual life for everyone and makes all slaves to righteousness (Rom 5:12–6:23), the good law and holy commandment can only intensify sin and bring about more sin and more death (Rom 7:1–13). Romans 7:14–25 provides confirmation for the preceding exegesis.

Romans 7:14*a* grounds Paul’s initial question and answer in 7:13: “Therefore, did the good in me become death? May it never be. . . For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, and I have been sold under sin.”¹²⁰ Romans 7:15*a* should be interpreted parallel to 7:14. Romans 7:15*a* provides the second and third grounds to the initial question and answer in 7:13: “Therefore, did the good produce death in me? May it never be (7:13*a*). . . For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, and I have been sold under sin (7:14), for I do not know what I am doing” (Rom 7:15*a*).

The word γάρ (“for”) in Rom 7:15*b* further explicates the preceding clause in Rom 7:15*a*, also introduced by γάρ. In addition, Rom 7:15*b* grounds the initial question and answer in 7:13*a*. Romans 7:16–20 further develops the argument regarding the condemnation that comes through sin’s use of the law. Paul states that sin uses the law to provoke one to do the opposite of what he wants to do (Rom 7:16–20). Interpreters have often argued that Paul’s

¹²⁰This statement counters that Paul only refers to a Christian experience since Paul would never assert that a Christian is sold under the power of sin. Rather, he arduously argues elsewhere that believers are free from sin’s tyranny by the power of the Spirit (see Rom 6:1–7:17; Galatians 3–5).

words in 7:16–20 mean that he experiences an internal struggle with sin to the point that although he does not want to commit sin, he does not have a choice in the matter since “the old man” still influences him.¹²¹ Nevertheless, the preceding interpretation is a case of the right doctrine from the wrong text.¹²² Also, this interpretation is nonsensical in light of Paul’s argument in Romans 6 that believers have died to sin and that the power of sin no longer reigns over them.

In Rom 7:16–20, therefore, Paul emphasizes that when the law took root in his conscience (and in the conscience of all Jews), it proved that he (and all under the law) was a transgressor of the law (i.e., a violator of a specific command) since sin used the law to stimulate sin, to confirm death, and to increase the power of sin (see Rom 5:20–6:23; 2 Cor 3:6). This point explains Paul’s earlier statement in Rom 7:8 that he “was formerly living apart from the law, but that sin came to life after the commandment came.” Paul’s statements in Rom 5:12–21 regarding the transgression of Adam that produced death prior to the giving of the Mosaic Law provide support for this interpretation of Rom 7:16–20. Romans 7:10–11 provides further support since sin used the law to produce death through the commandment. This interpretation of Rom 7:16–20 is also trustworthy since Paul states in Rom 7:21 that “evil is present in me.” In addition, Paul states that he “delights in the law of God in his inner man,” (Rom 7:22), “the law of sin” wages war in his body (Rom 7:23), and Christ will deliver him from his body of sin (Rom 7:24–25).

Jesus delivers from death. The unit of Rom 8:1–30 affirms sin’s universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God. Romans 8:1–11 summarizes the argument regarding the law’s condemnation in Romans 7. Paul infers in Rom 8:1–11 from 7:1–25 that Jesus delivers those condemned by the law. His logic can be summarized as follows: Paul is in Christ Jesus. Since Jesus will deliver him from the law’s condemnation (Rom 7:24), “no condemnation exists for those in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). The condemnation from which Jesus delivers would include the condemnation that

¹²¹This interpretation is a common one frequently heard from laypersons and pulpits.

¹²²I get the phrase “right doctrine from the wrong text” from G. K. Beale, *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts: Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994).

comes to everyone as a result of Adam's sin and thereby as a result of sin's universal impact on humankind's relationship with God (Rom 5:12–21). Paul especially refers in Rom 8:1 to deliverance from the condemnation that Adam's sin introduces to everyone and that the law makes more severe for everyone. This deliverance from condemnation is supported by Rom 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus freed you from the law of sin and of death."

Νόμος ("law") in Rom 8:2 is possibly metaphorical, which would warrant its translation as "rule," or "principle," since the noun that the genitives τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ("of the Spirit of life")¹²³ modify is νόμος, since the genitives refer to the Holy Spirit and eternal life, and since the Mosaic covenant was not characterized by eternal life through the Spirit, but by obedience (see Lev 18:5).¹²⁴ Nevertheless, the phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου ("from the law of sin and of death")¹²⁵ in 8:2 refers to the Mosaic law since Paul has already stated that sin used the law to produce death (Rom 7:8–13) and since Paul's discussion in 2:1–7:25 includes a discussion about the law, sin, and death. References to life through the Spirit and death in the flesh in Rom 8:5–17 further support sin's active role in producing death. Life¹²⁶ in the flesh, life apart from the Spirit, and life apart from Christ equal life under the law (see Romans 5–8). Thus, the law that is characterized by the Spirit and eternal life frees those condemned by the law by means of Jesus since God condemned sin in Jesus' death for sin (Rom 8:3).¹²⁷

Romans 8:12–25 further demonstrates the universal impact of sin on humankind's relationship with God. The inferential particles ἄρα ("therefore") and οὖν ("then") in Rom 8:12 together suggest that 8:12–17 comprises an inference to the preceding unit in 8:1–11. Paul's argument in Rom 8:1–17 can be outlined as follows: (1) No condemnation exists for those in Christ Jesus since God provided a solution for those whom the law condemned by

¹²³I understand the genitives as descriptive genitives: "the law [characterized by] the Spirit and life."

¹²⁴Against a metaphorical use, see Schreiner, *Romans*, 400. Rightly, Moo, *Romans*, 473–75, esp. 475.

¹²⁵I understand the genitives as objective genitives: "the life that produces sin and death."

¹²⁶I use "life" in the above sentence to refer to the human condition, not to "eternal life."

¹²⁷The sacrificial nature of Jesus' death in Romans 8 will be discussed in chapter 3.

offering Jesus as a sin offering, so that Jesus would fulfill the righteous requirement of the law for those who rely upon the Spirit, not upon the law (Rom 8:1–4). (2) That is, God provided this solution because those who are in the flesh cannot please God, whereas those who have the Spirit will experience resurrection and eternal life (Rom 8:5–11). (3) Therefore, believers are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, for those who are in the flesh will die and those who are in the Spirit are children of God (Rom 8:12–17). Especially pertinent are the words “to live” (Rom 8:12–13) and “to die” (Rom 8:13). Since “to live” occurs in the context of life through the Spirit and “to die,” in the context of death through the flesh, Paul’s language here references spiritual life and death. Death comes through humankind’s bondage to the law because of sin; sin entered through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Sin uses the law to increase the severity of sin and thereby to bring about death (see Rom 5:12–21; 7:10–13).

Sin’s universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God is further seen in Rom 8:18–25. The latter unit connects with Rom 8:1–17. The connection is evident by γάρ (“for”) in 8:18. Romans 8:18–25 restates the thesis of 8:1–17 by further discussing the hope that all—Jews and Gentiles—have in Christ since Jesus freed them from the law’s condemnation (see Rom 8:1–2). Paul suggests that the current sufferings cannot compare to the glory that will be revealed in believers (Rom 8:18).¹²⁸

Paul grounds this proposition in 8:19–21. He suggests that the present sufferings cannot be compared to the future glory, “for the longing of creation awaits the revelation of the sons of God” (Rom 8:19) and “for the creation was submitted in futility—not willingly but because of the one who submitted it—because the creation itself will be freed from the slavery of corruption resulting in the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom 8:20–21). Paul explicates Rom 8:18–21 in Rom 8:22. The unit of Rom 8:22–25 resumes discussion of the hope of the future redemption of the entire creation. Here, sin has a universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God since Paul describes creation as “groaning” (Rom 8:22) and “suffering birth pangs” (Rom 8:22) and since he states that believers currently await the redemption of their bodies (Rom 8:23).

¹²⁸Scholars debate the meaning of the phrase εἰς ἡμᾶς (“in us”). Translation options are “in us,” “for us,” “toward us,” or “with respect to us.”

2 Corinthians. Second Corinthians 3:6–18 demonstrates sin’s universal impact on humankind’s relationship with God.¹²⁹ Second Corinthians 3 is part of a broader unit that consists of 2 Cor 1:12–7:16.¹³⁰ Paul defends his apostolic ministry in this unit. Second Corinthians 3:6–18 discusses the authenticity of Paul’s apostleship: he is a minister of the new covenant. Paul argues in 3:1–18 that his apostolic ministry is authentic since he is a minister of the new covenant and since the glory of the new covenant surpasses the glory of Moses’ ministry in the old covenant. Thus, Paul argues that he does not need letters of commendation either from or to the Corinthians to validate his apostolic ministry since the Corinthians’ initial conversion attests to the authenticity of his ministry of the new covenant (2 Cor 3:1–3).

Paul provides pertinent statements pertaining to the Mosaic law in 2 Cor 3:3 and 3:6–18. Paul states in 2 Cor 3:2 that the Corinthians’ individual conversions serve as letters of commendation for Paul’s apostolic ministry, letters read and evaluated by all men. In 3:3, Paul develops 3:2 by stating that the Corinthians manifest that they are an “epistle of Christ” because he ministered to them. He subsequently states that the Corinthians were not an epistle written with ink, but were written “by the Spirit of the living God” and “not on stone tablets, but on fleshly heart tablets” (3:3*b*). Paul assures the Corinthians in 3:4–6 that he and his companions do not have confidence in themselves as the source of the Corinthians’ conversions, but have such confidence through Christ. He also assures them that they themselves were not sufficient for this new covenant ministry, but that their sufficiency came from God since God “made us to be ministers of the new covenant, not [a covenant] of the letter but [a covenant] of the Spirit, for the letter kills and the Spirit gives life” (2 Cor 3:6). The words “to be written” (γράφω), “ink” (μέλαν), “stone tablets” (πλαξίν λιθίνας), “tablets of human hearts” (πλαξίν καρδίαις σαρκίνας), “new covenant” (καινῆς διαθήκης), “letter” (γράμμα), “Israel,” “Moses,” and “glory” (δόξα) throughout 3:3–18 suggest that Paul has the Mosaic covenant in mind in 3:6 and that he is specifically alluding to the Sinai

¹²⁹For a detailed exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3, see S. J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel: The Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3* (Nottingham: Paternoster, 2005).

¹³⁰So M. J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 127.

covenant. It follows, then, that when Paul suggests that the “letter kills,” he means the old covenant does not bring spiritual life since an integral part of Paul’s teaching and preaching was that the law does not justify. Instead, one is justified by faith and thereby receives the gift of the Spirit (see Gal 3:1–14). The verb “to kill” here alludes to the death that comes to human beings on account of Adam’s sin since the text contrasts the death that the Mosaic covenant brings with the life that the new covenant brings through the Spirit (2 Cor 3:6).

Galatians. The universal impact of sin on humankind’s relationship with God is evident in Gal 2:18–21. This unit forms part of Paul’s argument in Gal 2:11–21.¹³¹ The gospel is at stake in Galatians, for many of the Galatians were beginning to turn, or at least they were contemplating a turn, away from Paul’s gospel (Gal 1:6). In Gal 1:11–2:10, Paul endeavors to establish the authenticity of his apostolic ministry of preaching the gospel (Gal 1:6–2:10). Thus he demonstrates that his gospel did not originate with man, but with God (Galatians 1–2). Central to this premise is Paul’s delay of his journey to Jerusalem to see the apostles until years after his conversion and his ministry of preaching the gospel (Gal 1:13–2:10). In Gal 2:11–21, Paul demonstrates not only that his gospel was consistent with the other apostles’ gospel before he journeyed to Jerusalem, but also that he remained faithful to the gospel even when Peter wavered.

Paul mentions that sin severed humankind’s relationship with God in 2:18–21 in order to argue that a sinner’s seeking justification in Christ does not make Christ a minister of sin (see Gal 2:15–17): “for, if I rebuild again what I destroyed, I make myself to be a transgressor” (Gal 2:18). Paul follows this statement in Gal 2:19 with an explanation of 2:18: “for I died to the law through the law, so that I would live to God; I have been crucified with Christ.” With the verb “to live,” Paul indirectly refers to spiritual death during his life under the law. He was dead to eternal life before faith in Christ, but his death to the law and his faith in Christ secured eternal life (see Gal 2:19–21).

¹³¹For a detailed exegesis of Gal 2:11–21, see the critical commentaries of the Greek text. E.g., F. F. Bruce, *Galatians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 128–47; R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Nashville: Nelson, 1990), 62–96.

Ephesians. Sin's universal impact on humankind's relationship with God is evident in Ephesians. The classic text in support of this premise is Ephesians 2. Paul begins the body of his letter to the Ephesians with a long doxology pertaining to the spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph 1:3–14).¹³² These spiritual blessings in Christ are the basis upon which Paul prays for the Ephesians (1:14–15). Paul essentially prays that the Ephesians will understand more clearly the great work of salvation that God has performed in their lives through Christ (Eph 1:16–22). Ephesians 2 elaborates on God's great work of salvation by highlighting the spiritual state of the Ephesians before their conversion.

In Eph 2:1, Paul states that the Ephesians “were dead in trespasses and sins.” He follows this indictment with reminding the Ephesians that they walked in their sins “in accordance to the age of this world” (Eph 2:2a). Paul develops the preceding statement with a series of explicative phrases that define more precisely the way the Ephesians “walked” (i.e., how they lived their lives) before their conversion: “in accordance with the ruler over the authority of the air, i.e., [in accordance with] the spirit of the one who works in the sons of disobedience” (Eph 2:2).

In short, Paul asserts that the Ephesians were dead to the point that they lived their lives in a satanic fashion. As a result, they fulfilled the desires of their sinful nature (Eph 2:3). In Eph 2:4–8, Paul explains how the Ephesians passed from death to life: “God made [you] alive by means of Christ Jesus while you were dead in trespasses and sin” (Eph 2:4–5). God's supernatural work in the dead hearts of sinners rejecting Christ is the only way their hearts can be resurrected. Several statements in this text affirm that death here is fundamentally spiritual: “you were dead in trespasses and in sins” (Eph 2:1); “you walked in sin” (Eph 2:2); “we lived in the lusts of our flesh” (Eph 2:3); “we practiced the desires of the flesh” (Eph 2:3); “God made [you] alive while you were dead in trespasses” (Eph 2:5); “God raised [you] and sat [you] in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph 2:6); and “by grace you have been saved through faith” [i.e., saved from spiritual death] (Eph 2:8).

¹³²Scholars duly note that Eph 1:3–14 is one Greek sentence. For this, see recently H. W. Hoehner, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 153.

Sin Has Broken Humankind's Relationship with Fellow Man

Romans 14–15. Paul teaches that sin has broken humankind's relationship with their fellow man. Romans 14–15 is the first place canonically in the Pauline corpus where such brokenness is evident. The tone of the letter suggests that Paul wrote Romans to a church consisting of Jews and Gentiles.¹³³ Conflict between Jews and Gentiles within the Roman church is evident from Romans 14–15 because of Paul's discussion of the weak and the strong brothers. In Rom 14:1, Paul urges the Romans to receive "the one who is weak in the faith." That Paul gives this command to a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles is evident in Rom 14:2 because of its discussion of table fellowship: "On the one hand, someone believes [that it is okay] to eat all things, but, on the other hand, the one who is weak eats vegetables."¹³⁴

Romans 15:1–13 continues the discussion of the weak and the strong brothers. Romans 15:1 suggests that the strong brother ought to bear the burdens of the weak one. Romans 15:7–9 appeals to the Romans to "receive one another" as Christ received them since Christ "became a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, so that he would confirm the promises of the fathers and so that the Gentiles would glorify God for the sake of mercy." Paul specifically mentions Jews with the term περιτομῆς ("circumcision") in 15:8, and Gentiles with the term ἔθνη ("Gentiles") in 15:9. Paul highlights the Gentiles in Rom 15:9–12. Since Paul refers to the strong and weak brothers in Romans 14, since the language of the strong and weak brothers in 1 Corinthians 8 refers to relationships between Jews and Gentiles, and since Paul mentions Jews and Gentiles in Romans 15, the fundamental issue in Romans 14–15 is likely relationships between Jews and Gentiles.

¹³³The above statement does not suggest that the Roman congregation had an equal number of Jews and Gentiles, but that Jews and Gentiles possibly comprised the ethnic composition of the church. A. A. Das (*Solving the Romans Debate* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007]) recently challenged this thesis. Das argues that Romans was written to an exclusively Gentile audience. Das's thesis did not originate with him. N. Elliott (*The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism* [JNTS 45; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990; Fortress edition, 2006]) and Stowers (*A Re-reading of Romans*) advocated the same thesis years earlier.

¹³⁴Against Das, *The Romans Debate*, 53–114.

Furthermore, Paul's command "to receive one another" in Rom 15:7 is a call to Jews and Gentiles to accept one another since Paul gives this command in a context in which he speaks of Jesus becoming a servant for Jews and Gentiles. Thus, there appears to be a tension between two groups of people among the Roman Christians. One group (believing Jews) consists of people whose weak conscience prevents them from partaking of certain types of food. The other group (believing Gentiles) consists of people whose strong conscience enables them to eat anything without harming their conscience. The command to receive one another in Rom 15:7 assumes that potential for division could exist among the two groups since one group (Jews) would abstain from eating certain foods but the other group (Gentiles) would eat anything (see 1 Corinthians 8–10).¹³⁵

1 Corinthians. Perhaps the most obvious Pauline example of human relationships broken because of sin is found in 1 Corinthians. The church at Corinth was a divisive church (1 Cor 1:11). The Corinthians were full of jealousy and selfish ambition. Some of the Corinthians yielded their allegiance to certain apostles. They were divided over the apostles and Christ: "I am of Apollos; I am of Cephas; but I am of Christ" (1 Cor 1:12).¹³⁶ Such divisions provoked Paul to argue in 1 Cor 1:12–4:13 that the Corinthians should not be divided over men, because the apostles were simply servants of Christ. Further, Paul demonstrates that the Corinthians were hostile toward one another in that they took one another to court (1 Cor 6:1–11).

As stated above, Paul demonstrates that the Corinthians were divided over issues pertaining to food, specifically over "meat

¹³⁵The language of Romans 14–15 reflects a situation similar to that in 1 Corinthians 8 where Paul discusses issues pertaining to meat sacrificed to idols (see 1 Cor 8:1). Paul primarily writes 1 Corinthians to a Gentile congregation (see Acts 18). Nevertheless, since Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome and since at least some Jews emigrated from Rome to Corinth, by the time that Paul preached the gospel there and established the church (see Acts 18:1–4; esp. 18:4), some Jewish converts were likely within the Corinthian congregation (see Acts 18:4). Therefore, Paul's instructions in Romans 14–15 regarding the weak and strong brothers should most likely be understood as instructions regarding Jewish-Gentile decorum in the church as it pertains to food laws since this issue had become a source of division for Jewish and Gentile Christians (see Acts 15; 1 Corinthians 8).

¹³⁶D. E. Garland (*1 Corinthians* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003], 47–48) argues that Paul uses his name and the names of Christ, Peter, and Apollos to illustrate that the Corinthians were divided over allegiances, not that they were necessarily divided over Paul, Christ, Peter, and Apollos.

offered to idols” (1 Cor 8:1). They were also divided over the way they should celebrate the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:17–21). Paul states in 1 Cor 11:20 that the Corinthians did not come together to eat the Lord’s Supper when they gathered together as a church. Instead, “each one takes ahead of time his own dinner when he eats” (1 Cor 11:21). The well-to-do Corinthians, who provided the food and drink for the Lord’s Supper, were consuming the food and drink before the have-nots arrived. First Corinthians 11:21*b* supports this interpretation: “And, on the one hand, someone is hungry, but, on the other hand, someone is drinking freely.”¹³⁷

Paul develops the latter statement in 1 Cor 11:22: “For do you not have houses so that you would eat and drink, or are you despising the church of God, and are you humiliating those who do not have?” That verse clarifies that those who were eating and drinking in 11:21 were doing so to the exclusion of those less fortunate in the body (i.e., the have-nots). This division was gross in Paul’s eyes since the Lord’s Supper is a meal that should be a source of unity instead of division within the body of Christ. Also, 1 Corinthians 12–15 further suggests that the Corinthians were divided because of their use and views of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12–14) and their understanding of the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15).

2 Corinthians. Second Corinthians 10–11 suggests that humankind’s relationship with fellow man is broken because of sin. Second Corinthians is largely about the sufficiency of God’s grace in suffering (see 2 Cor 1:3–2:17; 12:9). In these two chapters, Paul discusses at length the suffering that he experienced by his opponents on account of the gospel. His opponents challenged his apostolic authority (2 Cor 10:3,7–8) and attacked his personal appearance (2 Cor 10:10). Paul asserts that he was imprisoned (2 Cor 11:23), beaten numerous (2 Cor 11:23), in danger of death (2 Cor 11:23), flogged (2 Cor 11:24), and beaten with rods (2 Cor 11:25). In Damascus, he was even lowered in a basket from a window in order to escape the authorities (2 Cor 11:33). Such opposition resulted from sin’s universal impact on humankind and particularly on human relationships.

¹³⁷The verb *προλαμβάνω* (“to consume”) in 1 Cor 11:21 and the verb *ἐκδέχεσθε* (“to wait”) in 11:33 also support that some within the Corinthian congregation consumed their food and drink without leaving any for “the have-nots.”

Galatians. Evidence in Galatians likewise suggests that sin severed human beings' relationship with one another. It is the source of hostility and division among human beings. In Gal 5:16–26, Paul contrasts the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh. He exhorts the Galatians in 5:16 to walk by the Spirit and not to fulfill the “lust of the flesh.” The term “flesh” (σάρξ) is an important Pauline term.¹³⁸ Paul uses this term differently throughout his letters,¹³⁹ but σάρξ (“flesh”) in the phrase “lust of the flesh” (Gal 5:16) and in the corresponding phrase “works of the flesh” (Gal 5:19) refers to sinful desires that manifest themselves by sinful actions.¹⁴⁰ Σάρξ (“flesh”) in Gal 5:16 would certainly include a reference to circumcision (see Gal 3:3; 5:13) and life under the law (see Gal 5:18; Rom 6:14), but here it primarily refers to sin and to one's sinful nature.¹⁴¹

The preceding interpretation makes sense in light of Gal 5:17 and 5:19. In Gal 5:17, Paul provides a reason the Galatians should walk in the Spirit and should not fulfill the lust of the flesh: “For the flesh desires contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit [desires] contrary to the flesh, for these [i.e., flesh and Spirit] are opposed to one another.” In 5:19, Paul discusses the “works of the flesh,” which mean the works that flow from the flesh.¹⁴² Paul's comment in Gal 5:24 further supports that flesh in Gal 5:16–17 and 5:19 refers to humankind's sinful nature. In Gal 5:24, Paul states that those in Christ should “crucify the flesh with passions and desires.” “Passions” and “desires” refer to sinful passions and desires since Paul has already contrasted walking in the Spirit with not fulfilling the

¹³⁸ According to Gramcord's grammatical search engine, “flesh” (σάρξ) occurs at least 77 times in the Pauline corpus. See also Dunn (*Theology*, 62–70) for Pauline uses of “flesh.”

¹³⁹ Romans 1:3; 2:28; 3:20; 4:1; 6:19; 7:5,18,25; 8:3–9,12,13; 9:3,5,8; 11:14; 13:14; 1 Cor 1:26,29; 5:5; 6:16; 7:28; 10:18; 15:39,50; 2 Cor 1:17; 4:11; 5:16; 7:1,5; 10:2–3; 11:18; 12:7; Gal 1:16; 2:16,20; 3:3; 4:13,14,23,29; 5:13,16–17,19,24; 6:8,12–13; Eph 2:3,11,14; 5:29,31; 6:5,12; Phil 1:22,24; 3:3–4; Col 1:22,24; 2:1,5,13,18,23; 3:22; 1 Tim 3:16; Phlm 1:16.

¹⁴⁰ As Bruce (*Galatians*, 240) states in his comments on Gal 5:13, “flesh (σάρξ) is used here not simply of weak human nature nor yet of the life under bondage to the στοιχεῖα [*“fundamental elements”*] as opposed to life in the Spirit; it denotes (as in vv 16,19,24; 6:8) that self-regarding element in human nature which has been corrupted at the source, with its appetites and propensities, and which if unchecked produces the ‘works of the flesh’ listed in vv. 19f” (brackets mine).

¹⁴¹ I think this is what E. De Witt Burton (*Galatians* [ICC; 2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975], 292) meant when he asserted that σάρξ (“flesh”) has an ethical meaning throughout Galatians 5. Burton stated that σάρξ refers to “that element of man's nature which is opposed to goodness, and makes for evil.”

¹⁴² The above sense would understand the genitive τῆς σαρκός (“of the flesh”) in the phrase τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός (“the works of the flesh”) as a subjective genitive/genitive of origin.

lust of the flesh (5:16) and since he asserts that flesh and Spirit are opposed to each other (5:17) and produce different types of works (5:19–26). Galatians 5:26 supports this interpretation since it mentions some symptoms flowing from fleshly desires and passions: arrogance, irritation, and envy. In other words, sin flows from the flesh.

Paul follows his statement in Gal 5:24 with a statement pertaining to living by the Spirit in 5:25. Then, he states in 5:26 that Christians should not be known as “arrogant ones who irritate one another [and] who are jealous of one another.” Thus, in 5:24–26 Paul connects crucifying the flesh with sinful passions and desires, with a reassertion of the importance of living by the Spirit, and with an exhortation not to treat fellow Christians with hostility. The latter connections suggest that flesh refers to one’s sinful nature. The above interpretation of flesh is consistent with Paul’s statement in Eph 2:3 that Jews and Gentiles prior to their faith in Christ lived by the lusts of their flesh “by doing the will of the flesh and of the mind” (see Eph 2:1–3; 4:17–24). Therefore, flesh refers to one’s sinful nature in Gal 5:16–21 and the sinful works that flow from one’s sinful nature. More to the point, Paul states in Gal 5:19 works that come from one’s flesh. Some of these works that Paul mentions directly impede human relationships: “enmities” (Gal 5:19), “selfishness” (Gal 5:20), “jealousy” (Gal 5:20), “angers” (Gal 5:20), “rivalry” (Gal 5:20), “divisions” (Gal 5:20), “factions” (Gal 5:20), and “envies” (Gal 5:21).

Philippians. Broken human relationships because of sin are evident in Philippians. The preceding is first apparent in Philippians by Paul’s imprisonment. He was imprisoned on account of the gospel (Phil 1:13). Imprisonment suggests that humankind’s relationship with fellow man is broken since human beings imprison one another. In addition, while Paul was in prison, some were preaching the gospel with false motives “because of envy and selfish-ambition” (Phil 1:15,17). They did this with the expectation that they would “arouse affliction” in Paul’s chains (Phil 1:17).

According to Philippians 2, the Philippian congregation itself was also experiencing broken human relationships. This problem is evident not only because Paul exhorts the Philippians to be humble toward one another and serve one another by imitating

Christ's example (Phil 2:1–11), but also because Paul specifically singles out two women, Euodia and Syntyche, in Phil 4:2 who were evidently divided over a particular issue.¹⁴³ In light of Paul's exhortations before Phil 4:2 regarding unity within the church, the division between these two women possibly infected the entire Philippian congregation. Thus, again Paul demonstrates that sin severed humankind's relationship with his fellow man.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented evidence that sin is the fundamental reason human beings need to be reconciled to one another. Sin's universal impact upon humankind has first severed humankind's relationship with God, and has second severed human beings' relationships with one another. Along with a discussion of selected Old Testament and Pauline texts, two primary arguments are developed throughout the chapter: (1) because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, humankind's relationship with God has been broken so that human beings die spiritually; (2) because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, human beings' relationships with one another have been broken, and hostility exists between one another. Thus, human beings need to be reconciled first to God and second to one another because of sin. Chapter 3 considers God's provision for these broken relationships.

¹⁴³W. Schmithals' (*Paul and the Gnostics* [Nashville, 1972], 112–14) assertion, that these women disagreed on account of gnostic agitation and threatened the unity of the church by opening their homes—which hosted house churches—to the Gnostics, is at worst mere speculation and at best provocative conjecture. P. T. O'Brien (*Philippians* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991], 478) is right to suggest that we only know that these two women were apparently active members of the church and that their discord (whatever the exact nature) was a threat to the unity of the Philippian congregation.