

# Commentary on Romans Chapter 5:12-21

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FROM VERSE 1 TO 11, INCLUSIVE, THE APOSTLE DEDUCES SOME OF THE MORE OBVIOUS AND CONSOLATORY INFERENCES FROM THE DOCTRINE OF GRATUITOUS JUSTIFICATION. FROM THE 12TH VERSE TO THE END, HE ILLUSTRATES HIS GREAT PRINCIPLE OF THE IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, OR THE REGARDING AND TREATING THE MANY AS RIGHTEOUS, ON ACCOUNT OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE MAN, CHRIST JESUS, BY A REFERENCE TO THE FALL OF ALL MEN IN ADAM.

### ROMANS 5:12-21

### ANALYSIS

I. *Scope of the passage.* The design of this section is the illustration of the doctrine of the justification of sinners on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, by a reference to the condemnation of men for the sin of Adam. That such is its design is evident,

1. From the context. Paul has been engaged from the beginning of the Epistle in inculcating one main idea, viz., that the ground of the sinner's acceptance with God is not in himself, but the merit of Christ. And in the preceding verses he had said, "we are justified by his blood," ver 9; by his death we are restored to the divine favor, ver. 10; and through him, *i.e.*, by one man, we have received reconciliation, that is, are pardoned and justified, ver. 11. As this idea of men's being regarded and treated, not according to their own merit, but the merit of another, is contrary to the common mode of thinking among men, and especially contrary to their self-righteous efforts to obtain the divine favor, the apostle illustrates and enforces it by an appeal to the great analogous fact in the history of the world.

2. From an inspection of verses 12, 18, 19, which contain the whole point and substance of the comparison, Verses 13-17 are virtually a parenthesis; and verses 20, 21, contain two remarks, merely incidental to the discussion. Verses 12, 18, 19, must therefore contain the main idea of the passage. In the 12th, only one side of the comparison is stated; but in verses 18, 19, it is resumed and carried out: 'As by the offense of one all are condemned, so by the righteousness of one all are justified.' This, almost in the words of the apostle, is the simple meaning of verses 18, 19, and makes the point of the comparison and scope of the passage perfectly clear.

3. The design of the passage must be that on which all its parts bear, the point towards which they all converge. The course of the argument, as will appear in the sequel, bears so uniformly and lucidly on the point just stated, that the attempt to make it bear on any other involves the whole passage in confusion. All that the apostle says tends to the illustration of his declaration, 'As we are condemned on account of what Adam did, we are justified on account of what Christ did.' The illustration of this point, therefore, must be the design and scope of the whole.

It is frequently and confidently said that the design of the passage is to exalt our views of the blessings procured by Christ, by showing that they are greater than the evils occasioned by the fall. But this is not only improbable, but impossible.

1. Because the *superabounding* of the grace of the gospel is not expressly stated until ver. 20. That is, not until the whole discussion is ended; and it is introduced there merely incidentally, as involved in the apostle's answer to an objection to his argument, implied in the question, 'For what purpose did the law enter?' Is it possible that the main design of a passage should be disclosed only in the reply to an incidental objection? The pith and point of the discussion would be just what they are now, had no such objection been suggested or answered; yet, if this view of the subject is correct, had the objection not been presented, the main design of the passage would have been unexpressed and undiscoverable.

2. The idea of the superiority of the blessings procured by Christ to the evils occasioned by Adam, although first expressly stated in ver. 20, is alluded to and implied in verses 16, 17. But these verses, it is admitted, belong to a parenthesis. It is conceded on all hands, that verses 13, 14, are designed to confirm the statement of ver. 12, and that verses 15-17, are subordinate to the last clause of ver. 14, and contain an illustration of its meaning. It is therefore not only admitted, but frequently and freely asserted, that verses 12, 18, 19, contain the point and substance of the whole passage, verses 13-17 being a parenthesis. Yet, in verses 12, 18, 19, the super abounding of the grace Christ is not even hinted. Can the main design of a passage be contained in a parenthesis, and not in the passage itself? The very nature of a parenthesis is, that it contains something which may be left out of a passage, and leave the sense entire. But can the main design and scope of an author be left out, and his meaning be left complete! If not, it is impossible that an idea, contained only in a parenthesis should be the main design of the passage. The idea is in itself true and important, but the mistake consists in exalting a corollary into the scope and object of the whole discussion. The confusion and mistake in the exposition of a passage, consequent on an entire misapprehension of its design, may be readily imagined.

II. *The connection.* The design of the passage being the illustration of the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, previously established, the connection is natural and obvious: 'WHEREFORE, as by one man we have been brought under condemnation, so by one man we are brought into a state of justification and life.' The *wherefore* (*dia touto*) is consequently to be taken as illative, or marking an inference from the whole of the previous part of the epistle, and especially from the preceding verses. '*Wherefore* we are justified by the righteousness of one man, even as we were brought into condemnation by the sin of one man.' It would seem that only a misapprehension of the design of the passage, or an unwillingness to admit it, could have led to the numerous forced and unauthorized explanations of these words. Some render them *moreover*; others, in *respect to this*, etc.

III. *The course of the argument.* As the point to be illustrated is the justification of sinners on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, and the source of illustration is the fall of all men in Adam, the passage begins with a statement of this latter truth: 'As on account of one man, death has passed on all men; so on account of one,' etc., ver. 12. Before carrying out the comparison, however, the apostle stops to establish his position that all men are condemned on account of the sin of Adam. His proof is this: The infliction of a penalty implies the transgression of a law, since sin is not imputed where there is no law, ver. 13. All mankind are subject to death or penal evils; therefore all men are regarded as transgressors of a law, ver. 13. This law or covenant, which brings death on all men, is not the law of Moses, because multitudes died before that was given, ver. 14. Nor is it the law of nature written upon the heart, since multitudes die who have never violated even that law, ver. 14. Therefore, as neither of these laws is sufficiently extensive to embrace all the subjects of the penalty, we must conclude that men are subject to death on account of Adam; that is, it is for the offense of one that many die, vers. 13, 14. Adam is, therefore, a type of Christ. As to this important point, there is a striking analogy between the fall and redemption. We are condemned in Adam, and we are justified in Christ. But the cases are not completely parallel. In the first place, the former dispensation is much more mysterious than the latter; for if by the offense of one many die, MUCH MORE by the righteousness of one shall many live, ver. 15. In the second place, the benefits of the one dispensation far exceed the evils of the other. For the condemnation was for one offense; the justification is from many. Christ saves us from much more than the guilt of Adam's sin, ver. 16. In the third place, Christ not only saves us from death, that is, not only frees us from the evils consequent on our own and Adam's sin, but introduces us into a state of positive and eternal blessedness, ver. 17. Or this verse may be considered as an amplification of the sentiment of ver. 15. Having thus limited and illustrated the analogy between Adam and Christ, the apostle resumes and carries the comparison fully out: 'THEREFORE, as on account of one man all men are condemned; so on account of one, all are justified,' ver. 18. 'For, as through the disobedience of one, many are regarded and treated as sinners; so through the righteousness of one many are regarded and treated as righteous,' ver. 19. This then is the sense of the passage - men are condemned for the sin of one man, and justified for the righteousness of another. If men are thus justified by the obedience of Christ, for what purpose is the law? 'It entered that sin might abound,' *i.e.* that men might see how much it abounded; since by the law is the knowledge of sin. The law has its use, although men are not justified by their own obedience to it, ver. 20. As the law discloses, and even aggravates the dreadful triumphs of sin reigning, in union with death, over the human family, the gospel displays the far more effectual and extensive triumphs of grace through Jesus Christ our

Lord, ver. 21. According to this view of the passage it consists of five parts. The first, contained in ver. 12, presents the first member of the comparison between Christ and Adam. The second contains the proof of the position assumed in ver. 12, and embraces vers. 13, 14, which are therefore subordinate to ver. 12. *Adam, therefore, is a type of Christ.* The third, embracing vers. 15-17, is a commentary on this declaration, by which it is at once illustrated and limited. The fourth, in vers. 18, 19, resumes and carries out the comparison commenced in ver. 12. The fifth forms the conclusion of the chapter, and contains a statement of the design and effect of the law, and of the results of the gospel, suggested by the preceding comparison, vers. 20, 21.

## COMMENTARY

VERSE 12. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,* etc. The force of *dia touto, wherefore*, has already been pointed out, when speaking of the connection of this passage with the preceding: 'It follows, from what has been said of the method of justification that *as* by one man all became sinners *so* by one are all constituted righteous.' This passage, therefore, is the summation of all that has gone before *As* (*wsp̄er*), obviously indicates a comparison or parallel. There is however no corresponding clause beginning with *so*, to complete the sentence. Examples of similar incomplete comparisons may be found in Matthew 25:14, with *wsp̄er*, and in 1 Timothy 1:3, with *kaqwV*. It is however so obvious that the illustration begun in this verse is resumed, and fully stated in vers. 18, 19, that the vast majority of commentators agree that we must seek in those verses the clause which answers to this verse. The other explanations are unnecessary or unsatisfactory.

1. Some say that this verse is complete in itself, '*As* by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, *so* also death passed on all men, because all sinned.' The two insuperable objections to this explanation are, first, that it does violence to the words. It makes the apostle say what he does not say. It makes *kai outwV, and so*, to mean the same with *outw kai, so also*, which is impossible. And secondly, it is inconsistent with the whole design and argument of the passage. Instead of having a comparison between Christ and Adam, the comparison would be between Adam and other men: '*As* he sinned and died, *so* they sinned and died.'

2. Others say, that we find in the last clause of ver. 14, in substance, although not in form, the apodosis of this clause: '*As* by one man sin entered into the world, *so* Adam is the type of Christ.' But this is obviously inconsistent with the wording and connection of the clause in ver. 18.

3. De Wette proposes, after Cocceius, Elsner, and a few others, to make the *wsp̄er* of this verse introduce not the first, but the second member of the comparison, the first being to be supplied in thought, or borrowed from what precedes: '*We receive righteousness and life through Christ,* as by one man sin entered into the world;' or, 'Wherefore Christ stands in a relation to mankind analogous to that of Adam, as by one man,' etc.

But it is plain that no reader could imagine that Paul intended so essential a member of the comparison to be conjectured or framed from the preceding discussion. He does not leave his readers to supply one half of a sentence; he himself completes it in ver. 18.

*By one man sin entered into the world, di enoV angrwpou, k. t. l.* These words clearly declare a causal relation between the one man, Adam, and the entrance of sin into the world. Benecke, who has revived the doctrine of the preexistence of souls, supposes that Adam was the leader of the spirits who in the preexistent state sinned, and were condemned to be born as men. Adam was therefore the cause of sin entering into the world, because he was the author of this ante-mundane apostasy. The Pelagian theory is, that Adam was the mere occasional cause of men becoming sinners. He was the first sinner, and others followed his example. Or, according to another form of the same general idea, his sin was the occasion of God's giving men up to sin. There was no real connection, either natural or judicial, between Adam's sin and the sinfulness of his posterity; but God determined that if the first man sinned, all other men should. This was a divine constitution, without there being any causal connection between the two events. Others again say that Adam was the efficient cause of the sinfulness of his race. He deteriorated either physically or morally the nature which he transmitted to his posterity. He was therefore, in the same sense, the cause of the sinfulness of the race, that a father who impairs his constitution is the cause of the feebleness

of his children. Others push this idea one step farther, and say that Adam was the race. He was not only *a* man, but man. The whole race was in him, so that his act was the act of humanity. It was as much and as truly ours as his. Others say that the causal relation expressed by these words is that which exists between sin and punishment. It was the judicial cause or reason. All these views must come up at every step in the interpretation of this whole passage, for the explanation of each particular clause must be determined by the nature of the relation which is assumed to exist between Adam and his posterity. All that need be said here is, that the choice between these several explanations is not determined by the mere meaning of the words. All they assert is, that Adam was the cause of all men becoming sinners; but whether he was the occasional, the efficient, or, so to speak, the judicial cause, can only be determined by the nature of the case, the analogy of Scripture, and the context. One thing is clear - Adam was the cause of sin in a sense analogous to that in which Christ is the cause of righteousness.

*Sin entered into the world.* It is hardly necessary to remark, that *kosmoV* does not here mean the universe. Sin existed before the fall of Adam. It can only mean the world of mankind. Sin *entered* the world; it invaded the race. There is a personification here of sin, as afterwards of death. Both are represented as hostile and evil powers, which obtained dominion over man. By the words *eishlqe eiV ton kosmon*, much more is meant than that sin began to be in the world. It means that the world, *kosmoV*, mankind, became sinners; because this clause is explained by saying, *all sinned*. The entrance of sin is made the ground of the universality of death, and therefore all were involved in the sin whose entrance is mentioned. The word *amartia* means,

1. Actual sin (*amarthma*), an individual act of disobedience or want of conformity to the law of God. In the plural form especially, *amartia* means actual sin. Hence the expressions, "this sin," "respect of persons is sin," etc.
2. Sinful principle or disposition; an immanent state of the mind, as in Romans 7:8, 9, 17, 23.
3. Both ideas are united, as when it is said, "the sting of death is sin," "an offering for sin." This comprehensive sense of the word is perhaps the most common.
4. often means the guilt of sin as distinguished from sin itself, as when it is said, "he shall bear his sin," or, "the son shall not bear the sin of his father;" or when Christ is said "to bear our sin," and, "to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself," etc. In this passage, when it is said "sin entered into the world," the meaning may be, actual sin commenced its course, men began to sin. Or the meaning is, depravity, corruption of nature invaded the world, men became corrupt. This is the interpretation given to the words by a large class of commentators, ancient and modern.

So Calvin, "Istud peccare est corruptos esse et vitiatos. Illa enim naturalis pravitas, quam e matris utero afferimus, tametsi non ita cito fructus suos edit, peccatum est coram Deo, ejus ultionem meretur. Atque hoc est peccatum quod vocant originale." So also Olshausen, who says it means *habitus peccandi*, that inward principle of which individual sins are the expression or manifestation. Tholuck gives the same interpretation: a new, abiding, corrupting element, he says, was introduced into the organism of the world. De Wette's explanation amounts to the same thing: "Sünde als herrschende Macht (sin as a ruling power entered the world), partly as a principle or disposition, which, according to 7:8, slumbers in every man's breast, and reveals itself in the general conduct of men, and partly as a sinful condition, such as Paul had described in the opening chapters of this epistle." Rückert, Köllner, Bretschneider, and most moderns, unite with the older expositors in this interpretation. Or *amartia* may here have the third signification mentioned above, and "sin entered into the world," mean that men became guilty, *i.e.* exposed to condemnation. The objection to these several interpretations is, that each by itself is too limited. All three, taken collectively, are correct. "Sin entered into the world," means "men became sinners," or, as the apostle expresses it in ver. 19, "they were constituted sinners." This includes guilt, depravity, and actual transgression. "The sinfulness of that estate into which man fell (that is, the sin which Adam brought upon the world), consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it."

*And death by sin;* that is, death entered the world, men became subject to death, *dia thV amartiaV by*

*means of sin.* Sin was the cause of death; not the mere occasional cause, not the efficient cause, but the ground or reason of its infliction. This passage, therefore, teaches that death is a penal evil, and not a consequence of the original constitution of man. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:40-50, appears to teach a contrary doctrine, for he there says that Adam's body, as formed from the earth, was earthy, and therefore corruptible. It was flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It must be changed, so that this corruptible put on in corruption, before we can be fitted for immortality. These representations, however, are not inconsistent. It is clear, from Genesis 2:17; 3:19, that had Adam never sinned, he would never have died; but it does not follow that he would never have been changed. Paul says of believers, "we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed," 1 Corinthians 15:51. The penal character of death, therefore, which is so prominently presented in Scripture, or that death in the case of every moral creature is assumed to be evidence of sin, is perfectly consistent with what the apostle says of the *swma yucikon* (the natural body), and of its unsuitableness for an immortal existence. It is plain that *qanatoV* here includes the idea of natural death, as it does in the original threatening made to our first parents. In neither case, however, is this its whole meaning. This is admitted by a majority of the modern commentators - not only by such writers as Tholuck, Olshausen, and Philippi, but by others of a different class, as De Wette, Köllner, and Rückert. That the death here spoken of includes all penal evil, death spiritual and eternal, as well as the dissolution of the body, is evident,

1. From the consideration that it is said to be the consequence of sin. It must, therefore, mean that death which the Scriptures elsewhere speak of as the consequence and punishment of transgression.
2. Because this is the common and favorite term with the sacred writers, from first to last, for the penal consequences of sin. Genesis 2:17, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," *i.e.* thou shalt become subject to the punishment due to sin; Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death;" chap. 8:13, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Such passages are altogether too numerous to be quoted, or even referred to; see as further examples, Romans 1:32; 7:5; James 1:15; Revelation 20:14, etc.
3. From the constant opposition between the terms *life* and *death*, throughout the Scriptures; the former standing for the rewards of the righteous, the latter for the punishment of the wicked. Thus, in Genesis 2:17, life was promised to our first parents as the reward of obedience; and death threatened as the punishment of disobedience. See Deuteronomy 30:15, "I have set before thee life and death;" Jeremiah 21:8; Proverbs 11:19; Psalms 36:9; Matthew 25:46; John 3:15; 2 Corinthians 2:16, etc.
4. From the opposition in this passage between the life which is by Christ, and the death which is by Adam, vers. 15, 17, 21, 'Sin reigns unto death, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.' As, however, natural death is a part, and the most obvious part of the penal evils of sin, it no doubt was prominent in the apostle's mind, as appears from vers. 13, 14. Death, therefore, in this passage, means the evil, and any evil which is inflicted in punishment of sin.

*And so death passed on all men.* That is, as death is the necessary consequence of sin, death (*dihlqe*) passed through, reached to all men, because all sinned. Death is universal, because sin is universal. As Adam brought sin on all men, he brought death on all. That this is the true interpretation of this clause, or that *kai outwV*; means *demzufolge, consequently, hence it happens*, is admitted by almost all modern commentators. As already remarked, the interpretation which assumes that *kai outwV* is to be rendered *so also*, is entirely inadmissible,

1. Because it is inconsistent with their meaning. As it is impossible that *and so* should mean *so also*, it is no less impossible that was *kai outwV*; should mean the same as *outw kai*. Compare verses 18, 19; 1 Corinthians 11:12; 12:12; 15:22. This interpretation, therefore, does violence to the language.
2. It is no less inconsistent with the context. It is not Paul's design to teach the inseparable connection between sin and death, by saying, 'As Adam sinned, and therefore died, so also all die, because all sin.' His purpose is to teach the connection between Adam's sin and the death of all men: 'It was *by one man* that men became sinners, and hence all men die.' As all were involved in his sin, all are involved in his death.

3. The comparison carried through this whole paragraph is not between Adam and his posterity, but between Adam and Christ; and therefore *kai outwV* cannot possibly refer to the *wsp* at the beginning of the verse, as has been already shown.

*For that all have sinned, ej w panteV hmarton* The words *ej w* are rendered in the Vulgate, *in quo* (in whom), and are so understood by many of the older interpreters, not only in the Romish Church, where the Vulgate is of authority, but also by many Calvinists and Arminians. The objections to this interpretation are,

1. It is not in accordance with the meaning of the words as used elsewhere. It is inconsistent with the proper force of *epi* (*on, upon*), which is not equivalent with *en* (*in*), and no less inconsistent with the use of *ej w* in combination, which, in 2 Corinthians 5:4, means, as here, *because*; in Philippians 3:12, *for which cause*; and in Philippians 4:10, *for which*. In other places where it occurs, it means *on which*, as a bed, Mark 2:4; Luke 5:25; or as a place, Acts 7:33.

2. The proper meaning of the words is, *epi toutw oti*, *on account of this, or that*.

3. The structure of the sentence is opposed to this explanation. The antecedent *anqrwpou* is too far separated from the relative *w*; almost the whole verse intervenes between them.

4. This interpretation is altogether unnecessary. The ordinary and natural force of the words expresses a perfectly good sense: 'All men die, *because* all sinned.' So Calvin, *quadoquidem*, Luther, *dieweil*, and all the moderns, except a few of the Romanists. "Sin brought death, death has come on all, *because* sin came on all; *ej w* must therefore necessarily be taken as a conjunction." *Philippi*.

As to the important words *panteV hmarton*, rendered in our version *all have sinned*, we find that several interpretations already referred to as growing out of the different views of the nature of man and of the plan of salvation. First, on the assumption that all sin consists in the voluntary transgression of known law, and on the further assumption that one man cannot, in any legitimate sense, be said to sin in another, a large class of commentators, from Pelagius down, say these words can only mean that all have sinned in their own persons. Death has passed on all men, because all have actually sinned personally. This interpretation, although consistent with the signification of the verb *amartanw*, is, by the almost unanimous judgment of the Church, utterly inadmissible.

1. It is inconsistent with the force of the tense. The aorist (*hmarton*) does not mean *do* sin, nor *have* sinned, nor are accustomed to sin. It is the simple historical tense, expressing momentary action in past time. All sinned, *i.e.*, sinned in Adam, sinned through or by one man. "Omnes peccarunt, peccante Adamo." This is the literal, simple force of the words.

2. It is also incompatible with the design of this verse, to make *hmarton* refer to the personal sins of men. As so often remarked, the design is to show that Adam's sin, not our own, is the cause of death.

3. Verses 13, 14, are intended to prove what is asserted in ver. 12; but they do not prove that all men personally sin, but the very reverse.

4. This interpretation destroys the analogy between Adam and Christ. It would make the apostle teach, that as all men die because they personally sin, so all men live because they are personally and inherently righteous. This is contrary not only to this whole passage, but to all Paul's teaching, and to the whole gospel.

5. This interpretation is not only thus inconsistent with the force of the tense in which the verb *amartanw* is here used, with the design of the verse, with the apostle's argument, and the analogy between Christ and Adam, but it makes the apostle assert what is not true. It is not true that all die because all personally sin; death is more extensive than personal transgression. This is a fact of experience, and is asserted by the apostle in what follows. This interpretation, therefore, brings the sacred writer into conflict with the truth. Candid expositors admit this. They say Paul's argument is founded on a false assumption, and proves nothing. Even Meyer, one of the most dignified and able of the modern German commentators, who

often defends the sacred writers from the aspersions of irreverent expositors, is obliged to admit that in this case Paul forgot himself, and teaches what is not true. "The question," he says, "how Paul could write *ej wV panteV hmarton* (*since all sinned*), when children die, although they have not sinned, can only be answered by admitting that he did not think of this necessary exception. For, on the one hand, *panteV* must have the same extent of meaning as the previous *eiV pantaV anqrwpouV*, and on the other hand, the death of innocent children is proof positive that death is not in *all* men the consequence of individual sin; and hence, moreover, the whole doctrine that death is by divine constitution due to sin, is overthrown." An interpretation which makes the apostle teach what is not true, needs no further refutation. A second large class of commentators, as they make *amartia*, in the former clause of the verse, to mean *corruption*, translate *ej wV panteV hmarton*, *because all are corrupt*. □

Adam having defiled his own nature by sin, that depraved nature was transmitted to all his posterity, and therefore all die because they are thus inherently corrupt. We have already seen that this is Calvin's interpretation of these words: "Nempe, inquit, quoniam omnes peccavimus. Porro istud peccare est corruptos esse et vitiatos." In this view several of the modern commentators concur. According to this interpretation, the doctrine of the apostle is, that the inherent, hereditary corruption of nature derived from Adam, is the ground or reason why all die. This is what is called mediate imputation; or the doctrine that not the sin of Adam, but inherent depravity derived from him, is the ground of the condemnation of his race. Although Calvin gives this interpretation of the passage on which this theory is founded, it is not to be inferred that he was an advocate of that theory. He frequently and clearly discriminates between inherent depravity as a ground of condemnation and the sin of Adam as distinct, and says that we are exposed to death, not solely for the one, but also for the other. He lived in a day when the imputation of Adam's sin was made, by the theologians of the Romish Church, so prominent as to leave inherent depravity almost entirely out of view. The whole tendency of the Reformers, therefore, was to go to the opposite extreme. Every theology is a gradual growth. It cost the Church ages of controversy, before the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Person of Christ were wrought out and definitively settled. In like manner, the Theology of the Reformation was a growth. It was not the reproduction of the theology of any class of the school men, nor of Augustin as a whole. It was the gathering up and systematizing of the teachings of the Scriptures, and of the faith of the Church as founded on Scripture. That this should be done without any admixture of foreign elements, or as perfectly at the first attempt, as in the course of successive subsequent efforts, would have been a miracle. That it was done as 'perfectly as it was, is due, under God, to the fact that the Reformers were men endowed with minds of the very highest order, and filled with the Spirit of Christ. Still it is only in obedience to an established law, that the theology of the Reformation appears in a purer form in the writers of the seventeenth, than in those of the sixteenth century. We need not then be surprised that inconsistencies appear in the writings of Luther and Calvin, which are not reproduced in those of Hutter or Turretin.

In opposition to the interpretation which makes *panteV hmarton* mean *all became corrupt*, it is obvious to object,

1. That it is contrary to the simple meaning of the words. In no case has *amartanw* the sense here assigned to it.
2. It supposes that the corresponding phrase, "sin entered into the world," means "men became depraved," which, as we have seen, is not the true or adequate meaning.
3. It is inconsistent with the apostle's argument. Verses 13, 14, are designed to prove, and do prove, that all men sinned in Adam; but do not prove, and cannot be made to prove, that *all men* are inherently corrupt.
4. It vitiates the whole analogy between Christ and Adam, and therefore saps the very foundation of the gospel. That doctrine on which the hope of God's people, either implicitly or explicitly, has ever been founded is, that the righteousness of Christ as something out of themselves, something distinguished from any act or subjective state of theirs, is the ground of their justification. They know that there is nothing in them on which they dare for a moment rely, as the reason why God should accept and pardon them. It is therefore the essential part of the analogy between Christ and Adam, the very truth which the apostle

designs to set forth, that the sin of Adam, as distinguished from any act of ours, and from inherent corruption as derived from him, is the ground of our condemnation. If this be denied, then the other great truth must be denied, and our own subjective righteousness be made the ground of our justification; which is to subvert the gospel.

5. This interpretation is inconsistent with the true meaning of verses 15-19, and with the often repeated and explicit declaration of the apostle, that the sin of Adam was the ground of our condemnation. Although, therefore, it is true that our nature was corrupted in Adam, and has been transmitted to us in a depraved state, yet that hereditary corruption is not here represented as the ground of our condemnation, any more than the holiness which believers derive from Christ is the ground of their justification.

A third class of interpreters, especially those of the later mystical school, understand the apostle to assert that all men sinned actually in Adam; that his act was not merely representatively or putatively their act, but theirs in the strict and proper sense of the term. He being not simply *a* man as one among many, but *the* man in whom humanity was concentrated as a generic life, his act as an act of that generic humanity was the act of all the individuals in whom human nature subsequently developed itself. But,

1. In the first place, the proposition "all men sinned actually in Adam," has no meaning. To say that "in Adam all die," conveys a distinct idea; but to say that "all actually expired in Adam," conveys no idea at all. It has no sense. Even on the extremist realistic assumption that humanity as such is an entity, the act of Adam was not the act of all men. His act may have vitiated his generic nature, not only for his own person, but for his posterity; but this a very different thing from his act being their act. His sin was an intelligent act of self-determination; but an act of rational self-determination is a personal act. Unless, therefore, all men as persons existed in Adam, it is impossible that they acted his act. To say that a man acted thousands of years before his personality began, does not rise even to the dignity of a contradiction; it has no meaning at all. It is a monstrous evil to make the Bible contradict the common sense and common consciousness of men. This is to make God contradict himself.

2. It is hardly necessary to add, that this interpretation is inconsistent with the whole drift and design of the passage, and with the often repeated assertion of the apostle, that for the offense of one man (not of all men), the judgment came on all men to condemnation. If we all actually sinned in Adam, so that his act was strictly ours, then we all obeyed in Christ, and his righteousness and death were strictly our own acts; which again is not only unscriptural, but impossible.

The fourth class of interpreters, including commentators of every grade of orthodoxy, agree in saying that what is meant is, that all sinned in Adam as their head and representative. Such was the relation, natural and federal, between him and his posterity, that his act was putatively their act. That is, it was the judicial ground or reason why death passed on all men. In other words, they were regarded and treated as sinners on account of his sin. In support of this interpretation, it may be urged,

1. That it is the simple meaning of the words. It has already been remarked, that the aorist *hmarton* does not mean *are sinful*, or *have sinned*, but simply *sinned*. All sinned when Adam sinned. They sinned in him. But the only possible way in which all men can be said to have sinned in Adam, is putatively. His act, for some good and proper reason, was regarded as their act, just as the act of an agent is regarded as the act of his principal, or the act of a representative as that of his constituents. The act of the one legally binds the others. It is, in the eye of law and justice, their act.

2. This is sustained by the analogy of Scripture. Paul says, "in Adam all died." This cannot possibly be understood to mean that all men expired when Adam died. It can only mean that when Adam incurred the sentence of death for himself, he incurred it also for us. In like manner we are said to die in Christ; we "were crucified with him," we "rose with him," we are now "sitting with him in heavenly places." All this obviously means, that as Christ was the head and representative of his people, all that he did in that character, they are regarded as having done. The rationalistic and the mystical interpretations of such passages are only different modes of philosophizing away the meaning of Scripture - the one having what is called "common sense," and the other pantheism as its basis.

3. The common interpretation of this passage may, in another form, be shown to be in accordance with

scriptural usage. As remarked above, *amartia* sometimes means guilt, and the phrase "sin entered into the world," may mean men become guilty; and *amartanw* at times means to contract guilt; or, as Wahl in his Lexicon defines its *peccati culpam sustineo*; equivalent to *amartwloV katestaqhn*. He refers to the use of [hebrew word] in Genesis 44:32, a passage which the LXX. *hmarthkwV esomai*; the Vulgate, *peccati reus ero*; Luther, "will ich die Schuld tragen;" and the English, *I shall bear the blame*. So in Genesis 43:9, Judah says to his father, "If I bring him not back, I will bear the blame (literally, *I will sin*) all my days." In 1 Kings 1:21, Bathsheba says to David, (according to the Hebrew), "I and my son Solomon shall be sinners," where the LXX. translates, *esomeqa egw kai Salomwn o uioV mou amartwloi*, the sense of the passage being, as correctly expressed in our version, "I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders." To sin therefore, or to be a sinner may, in Scriptural language, mean *to be counted an offender*, that is, to be regarded and treated as such. When, therefore, the apostle says that *all men sinned* in Adam, it is in accordance not only with the nature of the case, but with scriptural usage, to understand him to mean that we are regarded and treated as sinners on his account. His sin was the reason why death came upon all men. Of course all that is meant by this is the universally recognized distinction between the signification and the sense of a word. *PanteV hmarton* signifies "all sinned," and it can signify nothing else; just as *panteV apeqanon*, 2 Corinthians 5:15, signifies "all died." But when you ask in what sense all died in Christ, or all sinned in Adam, the question is to be answered from the nature of the case and the analogy of Scripture. We did not all literally and actually die in Christ, neither did we all actually sin in Adam. The death of Christ, however, was legally and effectively our death; and the sin of Adam was legally and effectively our sin.

4. It is almost universally conceded that this 12th verse contains the first member of a comparison which, in vers. 18, 19, is resumed and carried out. But in those verses it is distinctly taught that 'judgment came on all men on account of the offense of one man.' This therefore is Paul's own interpretation of what he meant when he said "all sinned." They sinned in Adam. His sin was regarded as theirs.

5. This interpretation is demanded by the connection of this verse with those immediately following. Verses 13, 14, introduced by *for*, are confessedly designed to prove the assertion of ver. 12. If that assertion is, 'all men are regarded as sinners on account of Adam,' the meaning and pertinency of these verses are clear. But if ver. 12 asserts merely that all men are sinners, then vers. 13, 14 must be regarded as proving that men were sinners before the time of Moses - a point which no one denied, and no one doubted, and which is here entirely foreign to the apostle's object. Or if *panteV hmarton* be made to mean *all became corrupt*, the objection still remains. The passage does not prove what it is designed to prove. Verses 13, 14, therefore, present insuperable difficulties, if we assign any other meaning than that just given to verse 12.

6. What verse 12 is thus made to assert, and verses 13, 14 to prove, is in verses 15-19, assumed as proved, and is employed in illustration of the great truth to be established: "For IF through the offense of one many be dead," ver. 15. But where it is said, or where proved, that the many die for the offense of one, if not in ver. 12, and vs. 13, 14? So in all the other verses. This idea, therefore, must be contained in ver. 12, if any consistency is to be maintained between the several parts of the apostle's argument.

7. This interpretation is required by the whole scope of the passage, and drift of the argument. The scope of the passage, as shown above, is to illustrate the doctrine of justification on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, by a reference to the condemnation of men for the sin of Adam. The analogy is destroyed, the very point of the comparison fails, if anything in us be assumed as the ground of the infliction of the penal evils of which the apostle is here speaking. That we have corrupt natures, and are personally sinners, and therefore liable to other and further inflictions, is indeed true, but nothing to the point. In like manner it is true that we are sanctified by our union with Christ, and thus fitted for heaven; but these ideas are out of place when speaking of justification. It is to illustrate that doctrine, or the idea of imputed righteousness, that this whole passage is devoted; and, therefore, the idea of *imputed sin* must be contained in the other part of the comparison, unless the whole be a failure. Not only does the scope of the passage demand this view, but it is only thus that the argument of the apostle can be consistently carried through. We die on account of Adam's sin, ver. 12; this is true, because on no other ground can the universality of *death* be accounted for, vers. 13, 14. But if we all die on Adam's account, how much more shall we live on account of Christ! ver. 15. Adam indeed brings upon us the evil inflicted for the

first great violation of the covenant, but Christ saves us from all our numberless sins, ver. 16. As, therefore, for the offense of one we are condemned, so for the righteousness of one we are justified, ver. 18. As on account of the disobedience of one we are treated as sinners, so on account of the obedience of one we are treated as righteous, ver. 19. The inconsistency and confusion consequent upon attempting to carry either of the other interpretations through, must be obvious to any attentive reader of such attempts.

8. The doctrine which the verse thus explained teaches, is one of the plainest truths of the Scriptures and of experience. Is it not a revealed fact above all contradiction, and sustained by the whole history of the world, that the sin of Adam altered the relation in which our race stood to God? Did not that sin of itself, and independently of anything in us, or done by us, bring evil on the world? In other words, did we not fall when Adam fell? The principle involved in this great transaction is explicitly and frequently asserted in the word of God, and runs through all the dispensations of his providence. He solemnly declares himself to be a God who "visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and fourth generation." And so he does. The curse of Canaan fell on his posterity; the Egyptians perished for the sins of Pharaoh; the Moabites and Amalekites were destroyed for the transgressions of their fathers; the leprosy of Naaman was to cleave to Gehazi, and "to his seed for ever;" the blood of all the prophets was exacted, says our Lord, of the men of his generation. We must become not only infidels but atheists, if we deny that God deals thus with men, not merely as individuals, but as communities and on the principle of imputation. The apostasy of our race in Adam, therefore, and the imputation of his sin to his posterity, although the most signal of the illustrations of this principle, is only one among thousands of a like kind.

9. The doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin, or that on account of that sin all men are regarded and treated as sinners, was a common Jewish doctrine at the time of the apostle as well as at a later period. He employs the same mode of expression on the subject, which the Jews were accustomed to use. They could not have failed, therefore, to understand him as meaning to convey by these expressions the ideas usually connected with them. And such, therefore, if the apostle wished to be understood, must have been his intention; see the Targum on Ruth 4:22, "On account of the counsel given to Eve (and her eating the fruit,) all the inhabitants of the world were constituted guilty of death." R. Moses of Trana, Beth Elohim, fol. 105, *i.e.* "With the same sin with which Adam sinned, sinned the whole world." Many such passages are to be found in the pages of Wetstein, Schoettgen, Eisenmenger, Tholuck, and other collectors and commentators. Meyer therefore admits that such was undeniably the doctrine of the Jews. On this point, Knapp, in his Theological Lectures (German edition, page 29,) says, "In the Mosaic account of the fall, and in the Old Testament generally, the imputation of Adam's sin is not mentioned under the term *imputation*, although the doctrine is contained therein." "But in the writings of the Talmudists and Rabbins, and earlier in the Chaldee Paraphrases of the Old Testament, we find the following position asserted in express words, 'that the descendants of Adam would have been punished with death (of the body) on account of his sin, although they themselves had committed no sin.'" On the next page he remarks, "We find this doctrine most clearly in the New Testament, in Romans 5:12, etc. The modern philosophers and theologians found here much which was inconsistent with their philosophical systems. Hence many explained and refined on the passage, until the idea of imputation was entirely excluded. They forgot, however, that Paul used the very words and expressions in common use on the subject at that time among the Jews, and that his immediate readers could not have understood him otherwise than as teaching this doctrine." And he immediately goes on to show, that unless we are determined to do violence to the words of the apostle, we must admit that he represents all men as subject to death on account of the sin of Adam. This is a theologian who did not himself admit the doctrine. It may be well to remark, that this interpretation, so far from being the offspring of theological prejudice, or fondness for any special theory, is so obviously the true and simple meaning of the passage required by the context, that it has the sanction of theologians of every grade and class of doctrine. Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans, and Rationalists, agree in its support. Thus Storr, one of the most accurate of philological interpreters, explains the last words of the verse in the manner stated above: "By one man all are subject to death, because all are regarded and treated as sinners, *i.e.* because all lie under the sentence of condemnation." □

The phrase, *all have sinned*, ver. 12, he says is equivalent to *all are constituted sinners*, ver. 19; which

latter expression he renders, "sie werden als Sünder angesehen und behandelt," that is, they were regarded and treated as sinners; see his Commentary on Hebrews, pp. 636, 640, etc. (Flatt renders *these words* in precisely the same manner.) The Rationalist, Ammon, also considers the apostle as teaching, that on account of the sin of Adam all men are subject to death; see Excursus C. to Koppe's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. Zachariae, in his *Biblische Theologie*, Vol. 6., p. 128, has an excellent exposition of this whole passage. The question of the imputation of Adam's sin, he says, is this, "whether God regarded the act of Adam as the act of all men, or, which is the same thing, whether he has subjected them all to punishment on account of this single act." This, he maintains, the apostle asserts and proves. On this verse he remarks: "The question is not here immediately about the propagation of a corrupted nature to all men, and of the personal sins committed by all men, but of universal guilt (*Strafwürdigkeit*, liability to punishment,) in the sight of God, which has come upon all men; and which Paul, in the sequel, does not rest on the personal sins of men, but only on the offense of one man, Adam, ver. 16." Neither the corruption of nature, nor the actual sins of men, and their liability on account of them, is either questioned or denied, but the simple statement is, that on account of the sin of Adam, all men are treated as sinners. Zachariae, it must be remembered, was not a Calvinist, but one of the modern and moderate theologians of Göttingen. Whitby, the great advocate of Arminianism, says on these words: "It is not true that death came upon all men, *for that*, or *because* all have sinned. (*He* contends for the rendering, *in whom*.) For the apostle directly here asserts the contrary, viz., that the death and the condemnation to it, which befell all man, was for the sin of Adam only; for here it is expressly said, that *by the sins of one man many died; that the sentence was from one*, and *by one man sinning to condemnation*; and that *by the sin of one, death reigned by one*. Therefore, the apostle doth expressly teach us that this death, this condemnation to it, came not upon us for the sin of all, but only for the sin of one, *i.e.*, of that one Adam, *in whom all men die*, 1 Corinthians 15:22." Dr. Wordsworth, Canon of Westminster, in his recent edition of the New Testament, says, in his comment on this verse: "Observe the *orist* tense, *hmarton, they all sinned*; that is, at a particular time, And when was that? Doubtless at the fall. All men sinned in Adam's sin. All fell in his fall." Philippi says: "We must supply in thought to *hmarton, en Adam*, or more precisely, *Adamo peccante*. 'Non agitur de peccato singulorum,' says Bengel, 'omnes peccarunt Adamo peccante.'" Such extracts might be indefinitely multiplied from the most varied sources. However these commentators may differ in other points, they almost all agree in the general idea, which is the sum of the whole passage, that the sin of Adam, and not their own individual actual transgressions, is the ground and reason of the subjection of all men to the penal evils here spoken of. With what plausibility can an interpretation, commanding the assent of men so various, be ascribed to theory or philosophy, or love of a particular theological system? May not its rejection with more probability be attributed, as is done by Knapp, to theological prejudice? Certain it is, at least, that the objections against it are almost exclusively of a philosophical or theological, rather than of an exegetical or philological character.

VERSES 13, 14. *For until the law, sin was in the world*, etc. These verses are connected by *for* with ver. 12, as introducing the proof of the declaration that death had passed on all men, on account of one man. The proof is this: the infliction of penal evils implies the violation of law; the violation of the law of Moses will not account for the universality of death, because men died before that law was given. Neither is the violation of the law of nature sufficient to explain the fact that all men are subject to death, because even those die who have never broken that law. As, therefore, death supposes transgression, and neither the law of Moses nor the law of nature embraces all the victims of death, it follows that men are subject to penal evils on account of the sin of Adam. It is for the offense of one that many die.

In order to the proper understanding of the apostle's argument, it should be born in mind that the term *death* stands for penal evil; not for this or that particular form of it, but for any and every evil judicially indicted for the support of law. Paul's reasoning does not rest upon the mere fact that all men, even infants, are subject to natural death; for this might be accounted for by the violation of the law of Moses, or of the law of nature, or by their inherent native depravity. This covers the whole ground, and may account for the universality of natural death. But no one of these causes, nor all combined, can account for the infliction of all the penal evils to which men are subjected. The great fact in the apostle's mind was, that God regards and treats all men, from the first moment of their existence, as out of fellowship with himself, as having forfeited his favor. Instead of entering into communion with them the moment they begin to exist (as he did with Adam,) and forming them by his spirit in his own moral image, he

regards them as out of his favor, and withholds the influences of the Spirit. Why is this? Why does God thus deal with the human race? The fact that he does thus deal with them is not denied by any except Pelagians. Why then is it? Here is a form of death which the violation of the law of Moses, the transgression of the law of nature, the existence of innate depravity, separately or combined, are insufficient to account for. Its infliction is antecedent to them all; and yet it is of all evils the essence and the sum. Men begin to exist out of communion with God. This is the fact which no sophistry can get out of the Bible or the history of the world. Paul tells us why it is. It is because we fell in Adam; it is for the one offense of ONE MAN that all thus die. The covenant being formed with Adam, not only for himself, but also for his posterity (in other words, Adam having been placed on trial, not for himself only, but also for his race,) his act was, in virtue of this relation, regarded as our act; God withdrew from us as he did from him; in consequence of this withdrawing, we begin to exist in moral darkness, destitute of a disposition to delight in God, and prone to delight in ourselves and the world. The sin of Adam, therefore, ruined us; it was the ground of the withdrawing of the divine favor from the whole race; and the intervention of the Son of God in our salvation is an act of pure, sovereign, and wonderful grace.

Whatever obscurity, therefore, rests upon this passage, arises from taking the word *death* in the narrow sense in which it is commonly used among men. If taken in its scriptural sense, the whole argument is plain and conclusive. Let *penal evil* be substituted for the word *death*, and the argument will stand thus: 'All men are subject to penal evils on account of one man; this is the position to be proved, ver. 12. That such is the case is evident, because the infliction of a penalty supposes the violation of law. But such evil was inflicted before the giving of the Mosaic law; it comes on men before the transgression of the law of nature, or even the existence of inherent depravity; it must therefore be for the offense of one man that judgment has come upon all men to condemnation.' The wide sense in which the sacred writers used the word death, accounts for the fact that the dissolution of the body (which is one form of the manifestation of the divine displeasure) is not only included in it, but is often the prominent idea.

*Until the law.* The *law* here mentioned is evidently the law of Moses. The word *acri* is properly rendered *until*, and not *during the continuance of*, a sense which the particle has in some passages. *Until the law* is immediately explained by the words *from Adam to Moses*. *Sin was in the world, i.e.* men were sinners, and were so regarded and treated. *Sin is not imputed*, that is, it is not laid to one's account, and punished. See 4:8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity;" and the familiar equivalent expressions. "His iniquity shall be upon him," Numbers 15:31; and, "He shall bear his iniquity." The word (*ellogeitai*) here used, occurs nowhere else in any Greek writer, except in Philemon 18. The common word for impute is *logizomai*. *When there is no law, mh ontoV nomou, there not being law.* Sin is correlative of law. If there is no law, there can be no sin, as Paul had already taught, 4:15. But if there is no sin without law, there can be no imputation of sin. As, however, sin was imputed, as sin was in the world, as men were sinners, and were so regarded and treated before the law of Moses, it follows that there must be some more comprehensive law in relation to which men were sinners, and in virtue of which they were so regarded and treated. The principle here advanced, and on which the apostle's argument rests is, that the infliction of penal evil implies the violation of law. If men were sinners, and were treated as such before the law of Moses, it is certain that there is some other law, for the violation of which sin was imputed to them. Instead of the interpretation just given, there are several other methods of explaining this verse, which should be noticed. Calvin, Luther, Beza, and not a few of the modern commentators, say that the clause, *sin is not imputed when there is no law*, means, men do not impute sin to themselves, *i.e.* do not regard themselves as sinners; do not feel their guilt, when there is no law. To a certain extent, the sentiment thus expressed is true. Paul, in a subsequent chapter, 7:8, says, "Without the law, sin was dead;" that is, unknown and disregarded. It is true, that ignorance of the law renders the conscience torpid, and that by the clear revelation of the law it is brought to life; so that by the law is the knowledge of sin. If, however, by *law*, is meant a written law, or a full and authenticated revelation of the will of God as a rule of duty, then it is only comparatively speaking true, that without law (*i.e.* such a law,) sin is unknown or disregarded. There is another law, as Paul teaches, 2:14, 15, written on the heart, in virtue of which men feel themselves to be sinners, and know the righteous judgment of God, by which they are exposed to death; see 1:32. The objections, however, to this interpretation are decisive:

1. In the first place, it is inconsistent with the meaning of the words here used. "To impute sin" never

means to lay sin to heart. The imputation is always made from without, or by another, not by the sinner himself. Tholuck, therefore, calls this interpretation "a desperate shift." "Noch," he says, "ist eine gewalt same Hülfe zu erwähnen die Manche diesem Ausspruche des Apostels zu bringen gesucht haben. Sie haben dem *ellogein* eine andere Bedeutung beigelegt. Sie haben es in der Bedeutung *achten, Rücksicht nehmen* genommen."

2. This interpretation proceeds on a wrong assumption of the thing to be proved. It assumes that the apostle designs to prove that all men are in themselves sinners, and for their personal guilt or defilement, are exposed to death. But this, as has been shown, leaves out of view the main idea of ver. 12. It is true, that all men are sinners, either in the sense of actual transgressors, or of having a depraved nature, and consequently are exposed to death; but; the specific assertion of ver. 12 is, that it was **BY ONE MAN** death passed on all men. This, therefore, is the thing to be proved, and not that all men are personally sinners. Of course it is not denied that men are subject to death for their own sins; but that is nothing to the point which the apostle has in hand. His design is to show that there is a form of death, or penal evil, to which men are subject, anterior to any personal transgression or inherent corruption.

3. This interpretation assumes that the apostle is answering an objection which has no force, or refuting an opinion which no one entertained. It supposes that the Jews held that the Gentiles, before the law of Moses, were not sinners, whereas they regarded them as pre-eminently such. It makes the apostle reason thus: 'All men are sinners. No,' objects the Jew, 'before Moses there was no law, and therefore no sin. Yes,' replies Paul, 'they were sinners, although they were not aware of it.' But as no human being believed that men were not sinners before the giving of the Mosaic law, as Paul himself had proved at length that the whole world was guilty before God, as he had expressly taught that the Gentiles, although they had no written law, were a law unto themselves, and that they stood self-condemned in the presence of God, it is unreasonable to suppose that the apostle would stop to refute an objection which has not force enough to be even a cavil. Paul had before laid down the principle (4:15,) that where there is no law, there is no aggression, which is only another form of saying, "sin is not imputed when there is no law." But as sin was imputed before the law of Moses, there must have been some other law, for the violation of which men were condemned. It is that the apostle designs to prove, and not that men were personally sinners; a fact, so far as the heathen were concerned, no Jew denied. Another interpretation, which is adopted by a large number of commentators and theologians, supposes that the word *death* is to be understood of natural death alone. The reasoning of the apostle then is, 'As on account of the sin of one man, all men are condemned to die, so on account of the righteousness of one, all are made partakers of life,' ver. 12. The proof that all are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam, is given in vers. 13, 14; 'The infliction of the specific penalty of death, supposes the violation of a law to which that particular penalty was attached. This could not be the law of Moses, since those die who never violated that law; and, in short, all men die, although they have never broken any express command attended by the sanction of death. The liability of all men, therefore, to this specific form of evil, is to be traced not to their own individual character or conduct, but to the sin of Adam.' Some of those who adopt this view of the passage, are consistent enough to carry it through, and make the *life* which is restored to all by Christ, as here spoken of, to be nothing more than the life of the body, *i.e.* the resurrection from the dead. 14 It will be observed, that this interpretation is, as to its main principle, identical with that presented above as correct. That is it assumes that ver. 12 teaches that God regarded the act of Adam as the act of the whole race, or in other words, that he subjected all men to punishment on account of his transgression. And it makes vers. 13, 14, the proof that the subjection of all men to the penal evil here specially in view, to be, not the corruption of their nature, nor their own individual sins, but the sin of Adam. It is, however, founded on two assumptions; the one of which is erroneous, and the other gratuitous. In the first place, it assumes that the *death* here spoken of is mere natural death, which, as shown above, is contrary both to the scriptural use of the term and to the immediate context. And, secondly, it assumes that the violation of the law of nature could not be justly followed by the death of the body, because that particular form of evil was not threatened as the sanction of that law. But this assumption is gratuitous, and would be as well authorized if made in reference to any other punishment of such transgressions; since no definite specific evil, as the expression of the divine displeasure, was made known to those who had no external revelation. Yet, as Paul says, Romans 1:32, the wicked heathen knew they were worthy of death, *i.e.* of the effects of the divine displeasure. The particular manner of the exhibition of that displeasure is a matter of indifference. It need hardly be remarked that it is not involved either in this or the commonly

received interpretation of this passage, that men, before the time of Moses, were not punishable for their own sins. While this is admitted and asserted by the apostle, he proves that they were punished for Adam's sin. No one feels that there is any inconsistency in asserting of the men of this generation, that although responsible to God for their personal transgressions, they are nevertheless born in a state of spiritual death, as a punishment of the sin of our great progenitor. The pains of child birth do not cease to be part of the penalty of the original transgression, although each suffering mother is burdened with the guilt of personal transgression. As the effort to make these verses prove that all men are actual sinners fails of giving them any satisfactory sense, so the interpretation which assumes that they are designed to prove inherent, hereditary depravity, is no less untenable. If *ej wV panteV hmarton*, in ver. 12, means, 'Death has passed on all, *because all are tainted with the hereditary corruption derived from Adam*,' then the argument in verses 13, 14, must stand thus: 'All men are by nature corrupt, for as sin is not imputed when there is no law, the death of all men cannot be accounted for on the ground of their actual sins; therefore, since those die who have never sinned, as Adam did, against a positive law, they must be subject to death for their innate depravity.' But, so far as this argument assumes that men, before the time of Moses, were not justly subject to death for their actual sins, it is contrary to truth, and to the express teaching of the apostle. Yet this is the form in which it is generally presented. And if it only means that actual sin will not account for the absolute universality of death, since those die who have never committed any actual transgression, the argument is still detective. Innate depravity being universal, may account for the universality of natural death; but *qanatoV*; includes much more than natural death. What is to account for spiritual death? Why are men born dead in sin? This is the very thing to be accounted for. The fact is not its own solution. Paul's argument is, that they are so born on account of Adam's sin. It is another objection to this interpretation, that it destroys the analogy between Christ and Adam, and therefore is inconsistent with the great design of the whole passage. Paul's object is to show, that as we are justified by the righteousness of Christ as something out of ourselves, so we are condemned for the sin of Adam as something out of ourselves. To make him teach that we are condemned for our inherent depravity, to the exclusion of Adam's sin, necessitates his teaching that we are justified for our inherent goodness, which destroys all hope of heaven. There is no interpretation of this passage consistent with the meaning of the words, the nature of the argument, the design of the context, and the analogy of Scripture, but the one given above, as commonly received. Köllner complains that Paul's argument is very confused. This he accounts for by assuming that the apostle had two theories in his mind. The one, that men die for their own sins; the other, that they die for the sin of Adam. His natural feelings led him to adopt the former, and he accordingly says, in verse 12, "Death passed on all men, because all have sinned." But as the Jewish doctrine of his age, that men were condemned for the sin of Adam, afforded such an admirable illustration of his doctrine of salvation through the merit of Christ, the apostle, says Köllner, could not help availing himself of it. Thus he has the two theories mixed up together, asserting sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. To those who reverence the Scriptures as the word of God, it is assuredly a strong argument in favor of the common interpretation of the passage, that it saves the sacred writer from such aspersions. It is better to admit the doctrine of imputation, than to make the apostle contradict himself.

VERSE 14. *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses.* That is, men were subject to death before the law of Moses was given, and consequently not on account of violating it. There must be some other ground, therefore, of their exposure to death. *Nevertheless (alla)*, the clause thus introduced stands in opposition to the preceding clause, *ouk ellogeitai*. That is, 'although sin is not imputed when there is no law, nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses.' *Death reigned, i.e.*, had undisputed, rightful sway. Men were justly subject to his power, and therefore were sinners.

*Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.* Instead of connecting *epi tw omoiwmati*, as is usually done with *mh amarthantaV*, Chrysostom connects them with *ebasileusen*. The sense would then be, 'death reigned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, even over those who had not sinned.' That is, death reigned over those who had not personally sinned, just as it reigned over Adam. This interpretation is adopted by Bengel, who says, "Quod homines ante legem mortui sunt, id accidit eis *super similitudine transgressionis Adam, i.e.*, quia illorum eadem atque Adami transgredientis ratio fuit: mortui sunt, propter alium reatum, non propter eum, quem ipsi per se contraxere, id est, propter reatum ab Adamo contractum." Although the sense thus expressed is good, and suited to the context, the construction is evidently forced. It is much more natural to take the words

as they stand. Death reigned over a class of persons who had not sinned as Adam had. The question is, What is the point of dissimilarity to which the apostle here refers? Some say it is, that Adam violated a positive command to which the sanction of death was expressly added, and that those referred to did not. The principal objections to this interpretation are,

1. That it destroys the distinction between the two classes of persons here alluded to. It makes Paul, in effect, reason thus: 'Death reigned over those who had not violated any positive law, even over those who had not violated any positive law.' It is obvious that the first clause of the verse describes a general class, and the second clause, which is distinguished from the first by the word *even*, only a portion of that class. All men who died from Adam to Moses, died without violating a positive command. The class, therefore, which is distinguished from them, must be contrasted with Adam on some other ground than that which is common to the whole.

2. This interpretation is inconsistent with the context, because it involves us in all the difficulties specified above, attending the sense which it requires us to put upon verses 13, 14, and their connection with ver. 12. We must suppose these verses designed to prove that all men are sinners, which, as just shown, is at variance with the context, with the obvious meaning of ver. 12, with the scope of the passage, and the drift of the argument.

Or we must adopt the interpretation of those who confine the word *death* to the dissolution of the body, and make the apostle argue to show that this particular evil is to be referred not to the personal sins of men, but to the sin of Adam. Or we are driven to some other unsatisfactory view of the passage. In short, these verses, when the clause in question is thus explained, present insuperable difficulties. Others understand the difference between Adam and those intended to be described in this clause, to be, that Adam sinned personally and actually the others did not. In favor of this view it may be argued,

1. That the words evidently admit of this interpretation as naturally as of the other. Paul simply says, the persons referred to did not sin as Adam did. Whether he means that they did not sin at all; that they were not sinners in the ordinary sense of that term; or that they had not sinned against the same kind of law, depends on the context, and is not determined by the mere form of expression.

2. If ver. 12 teaches that men are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam, if this is the doctrine of the whole passage, and if, as is admitted, vers. 13, 14 are designed to prove the assertion of ver. 12, then is it necessary that the apostle should show that death comes on those who have no personal or actual sins to answer for. This he does: 'Death reigns not only over those who have never broken any positive law, but even over those who have never sinned as Adam did; that is, who have never in their own persons violated any law, by which their exposure to death can be accounted for.' All the arguments, therefore, which go to establish the interpretation given above of ver. 12, or the correctness of the exhibition of the course of the apostle's argument, and the design of the whole passage, bear with all their force in support of the view here given of this clause. The opposite interpretation, as was attempted to be proved above, rests on a false exegesis of ver 12, and a false view of the context. Almost all the objections to this interpretation, being founded on misapprehension, are answered by the mere statement of the case. The simple doctrine and argument of the apostle is, that

**THERE ARE PENAL EVILS WHICH COME UPON MEN ANTECEDENT TO ANY TRANSGRESSIONS OF THEIR OWN; AND AS THE INFLECTION OF THESE EVILS IMPLIES A VIOLATION OF LAW, IT FOLLOWS THAT THEY ARE REGARDED AND TREATED AS SINNERS, ON THE GROUND OF THE DISOBEDIENCE OF ANOTHER.**

In other words, it was "by the offense of one man that judgment came on all men to condemnation." It is of course not implied in this statement or argument, that men are not now, or were not from Adam to Moses, punishable for their own sins, but simply that they are subject to penal evils, which cannot be accounted for on the ground of their personal transgressions, or their hereditary depravity. This statement, which contains the whole doctrine of imputation, is so obviously contained in the argument of the apostle, and stands out so conspicuously in the Bible, and is so fully established by the history of the world, that it is frequently and freely admitted by the great majority of commentators.

*Who is a figure of him that was to come*, tupoV tou mellontoV. PwV tupoV; jhsin? oti wsper ekeinoV toiV ex autou, kaitoige mh jagousin apo tou xulou, gegonen aitiaV qanatou tou dia thn brwsin eisacqentoV, outw kai o CristoV toiV ex autou, kaitoige ou dikaiopraghsasi, gegone proxenoV dikaiosunhV, hn dia tou staurou pasin hmin ecarisato? dia touto anw kai katw tou enoV ecetai, kai sunecwV touto eiV meson jerei. - *Chrysostom*. "How a type? he says: because *as* he was the cause of the death introduced by eating (the forbidden fruit,) to all who are of him, although they did not eat of the tree; so also Christ, to those who are of him, though they have not wrought righteousness, is become the procurer of the righteousness which, by means of the cross, he graciously gives to us all; on this account he first and last makes *the one* so prominent, continually bringing it forward." This is an interesting passage coming from a source so different from the Augustinian school of theology. Every essential point of the common Calvinistic interpretation is fully stated. Adam is the cause of death coming on all independently of any transgressions of their own; as Christ is the author of justification without our own works. And *the many*, in the one clause, are all who are of Adam; and *the many*, in the other, those who are of Christ.

The word rendered *figure*, tupoV, from tuptw (to strike,) means a print, or impression made by a blow; as in John 20:25, ton tupon tw n hlwn, *the print of the nails*. In a wider sense it means *a figure* or *form*, literally, as when spoken of an image, Acts 7:43, or figuratively when used of a doctrine, Romans 6:17. More commonly in the Scriptures it means either a model after which anything is to be made, Hebrews 8:5, or an example to be followed, Philippians 3:17, "as ye have us for an example," kaqwV ecete tupon hmaV. Besides these, so to speak secular meanings, it has the religious sense of *type*, a designed prefiguration or counterpart; either historically, as the Passover was a *type* or significant commemoration of the passing over, by the destroying angel, of the habitations of the Hebrews in Egypt; or prophetically, as the sacrifices of the Old Testament were types of the great sacrifice of the Lamb of God. A type, therefore, in the religious sense of the term, is not a mere historical parallel or incidental resemblance between persons or events, but a designed resemblance - the one being intended to prefigure or to commemorate the other. It is in this sense that Adam was the type of Christ. The resemblance between them was not casual. It was predetermined, and entered into the whole plan of God. As Adam was the head and representative of his race, whose destiny was suspended on his conduct, so Christ is the head and representative of his people. As the sin of the one was the ground of our condemnation, so the righteousness of the other is the ground of our justification. This relation between Adam and the Messiah was recognized by the Jews, who called their expected deliverer, *the last Adam*, as Paul also calls him in 1 Corinthians 15:45, o escatoV Adam. Adam was the type, tou mellontoV, either of the *Adam* who was to come, or simply *of the one to come*. The Old Testament system was preparatory and prophetic. The people under its influence were looking forward to the accomplishment of the promises made to their father. The Messianic period on which their hopes were fixed was called "the world or age to come," and the Messiah himself was o ercomenoV, o mellwn, *the one coming* 15 .

As Paul commenced this section with the design of instituting this comparison between Christ and Adam, and interrupted himself to prove, in vers. 13, 14, that Adam was really the representative of his race, or that all men are subject to death for his offense; and having, at the close of verse 14, announced the fact of this resemblance by calling Adam a type of Christ, he again stops to limit and explain this declaration by pointing out the real nature of the analogy. This he does principally by showing, in vers. 15-17, the particulars in which the comparison does not hold. In verses 18, 19, which are a resumption of the sentiment of ver. 12, he states the grand point of their agreement.

VERSE 15. *But not as the offense, so also is the free gift*. The cases, although parallel, are not precisely alike. In the first place, it is far more consistent with our views of the character of God, that many should be benefited by the merit of one man, than that they should suffer for the sin of one. If the latter has happened, MUCH MORE may we expect the former to occur. The attentive reader of this passage will perceive constantly increasing evidence that the design of the apostle is not to show that the blessings procured by Christ are greater than the evils caused by Adam; but to illustrate and confirm the prominent doctrine of the epistle, that we are justified on the ground of the righteousness of Christ. This is obvious from the sentiment of this verse, 'If we die for the sin of Adam, *much more* may we live through the righteousness of Christ.' *But not as the offense, etc.* All ouc wV to paraptwma, outw kai to carisma, a singularly concise expression, which however the context renders sufficiently plain. paraptwma from

parapiptw (to fall,) means *fall*, and *carisma*, *an act of grace* or *gracious gift*, which is explained by *h dwrea* in this verse, *to dwrhma* in ver. 16, and *h dwrea thV dikaiosunhV* (*the gift of righteousness*;) in ver. 17. The meaning therefore is, that the 'fall is not like the gracious restoration.' The reason why the one is not like the other, is stated in what follows, so that *gar* has its appropriate force: 'They are not alike, *for* if by the offense of one many be dead.' The dative *paraptwmati* expresses the ground or reason. The offense of one was the ground or reason of the many dying; and as death is a penalty, it must be the judicial ground of their death, which is the very thing asserted in ver. 12, and proved in vers. 13, 14. *Many be dead*; the words are *oi polloi apeqanon*, *the many died*, the aorist *apeqanon* cannot mean *be dead*. By *the many* are intended all mankind, *oi polloi* and *panteV* being interchanged throughout the context. They are called *the many* because they are many, and for the sake of the antithesis to *the one*. The many died for the offense of one; the sentence of death passed on all for his offense.

The same idea is presented in 1 Corinthians 15:22. It is here, therefore, expressly asserted that the sin of Adam was the cause of all his posterity being subjected to death, that is, to penal evil. But it may still be asked whether it was the occasional or the immediate cause. That is, whether the apostle means to say that the sin of Adam was the occasion of all men being placed in such circumstances that they all sin, and thus incur death; or that by being the cause of the corruption of their nature, it is thus indirectly the cause of their condemnation; or whether he is to be understood as saying that his sin is the direct judicial ground or reason for the infliction of penal evil. It has been frequently said that this is all theory, philosophy, system. etc. But any one may see that it is a mere exegetical question - what is the meaning of a given phrase? Does the dative here express the occasional cause, or the ground or reason of the result attributed to the offense of one man? It is a mere question of fact; the fact is all, and there is neither theory nor philosophy involved in the matter. If Paul says that the offense of one is the ground and reason of the many being subject to death, he says all that the advocates of the doctrine of imputation say. That this is the strict exegetical meaning of the passage appears from the following reasons:

1. That such *may* be the force and meaning of the words as they here stand, no one can pretend to doubt. That is, no one can deny that the dative case can express the ground or reason as well as the occasion of a thing.
2. This interpretation is not only possible, and in strict accordance with the meaning of the words, but it is demanded, in this connection, by the plainest rules of exposition; because the sentiment expressed by these words is confessedly the same as that taught in those which follow; and they, as will appear in the sequel, will not bear the opposite interpretation.
3. It is demanded by the whole design and drift of the passage. The very point of the comparison is, that as the righteousness of Christ, and not our own works, is the ground of our justification, so the sin of Adam, antecedently to any sins of our own, is the ground of the infliction of certain penal evils. If the latter be denied, the very point of the analogy between Christ and Adam is destroyed.
4. This interpretation is so plainly the correct and natural one, that it is, as shown above, freely admitted by the most strenuous opponents of the doctrine which it teaches.

*Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, faith abounded unto many.* Had Paul been studious of uniformity in the structure of his sentences, this clause would have been differently worded: 'If by the offense of one many die, much more by the free gift of one shall many live.' The meaning is the same. The force of the passage lies in the words *much more*. The idea is not that the grace is more abundant and efficacious than the offense and its consequences: this idea is expressed in ver. 20; but, 'if the one dispensation has occurred, much more may the other; if we die for one, much more may we live by another.' The *pollw mallon* does not express a higher degree of efficacy, but of evidence or certainty: 'If the one thing has happened, much more certainly may the other be relied upon.' The first clause of the verse may be thus interpreted, 'the grace of God, even the gift by grace;' so that the latter phrase is explanatory of the former. If they are to be distinguished, the first refers to the cause, viz. the grace of God; and the second to the result, viz. the gift by grace, *i.e.* the gracious or free gift, viz. the gift of righteousness, as explained in ver. 17. *Which is by one man, Jesus Christ*; that is, which comes to us through Christ. This free gift is of course the opposite of what comes upon us for the sake of Adam. Guilt and condemnation come from him; righteousness and consequent acceptance from Jesus Christ.

What is here called the free gift is, in ver. 17, called the gift of righteousness. *Hath abounded unto many, eiV touV pollouV, unto the many*; that is, has been freely and abundantly bestowed on the many. Whether the many, in this clause, is coextensive numerically with the many in the other, will be considered under ver. 18.

VERSE 16. *And not as it was by one that sinned, 16 so is the gift*, etc. This clause, as it stands in the original, *and not as by one that sinned, the gift*, is obviously elliptical. Some word corresponding to *gift* is to be supplied in the first member; either *offense*, which is opposed to the *free gift* in the preceding verse; or *judgment*, which occurs in the next clause. The sense then is, 'The gift (of justification, see ver. 17) was not like the sentence which came by one that sinned.' So Professor Stuart, who very oppositely renders and explains the whole verse thus: "Yea, the (sentence) by one who sinned, is not like the free gift; for the sentence by reason of *one* (offense) was unto condemnation (was a condemning sentence); but the free gift (pardon) is of *many* offenses, unto justification, *i.e.* is a sentence of acquittal from condemnation." The point of this verse is, that the sentence of condemnation which passed on all men 17 for the sake of Adam, was for one offense, whereas we are justified by Christ from *many* offenses. Christ does much more than remove the guilt and evils consequent on the sin of Adam. This is the second particular in which the work of Christ differs from that of Adam.

*For the judgment was by one to condemnation. By one ex enoV*, either by one *man*, or by one *offense*. As *amartisantov* is the true reading in the preceding clause, most modern commentators say that *enoV* must be masculine, by *one man*. The antithesis, however, between *enoV* and *pollwn* is so obvious, that it is more natural to supply *paraptwmatoV*, from the next clause, as in Hebrew parallelisms, an ellipsis in the first member must at times be supplied from the second. An example of this kind Gesenius finds in Isaiah 48:11. Here the very object of the apostle is to contrast the one *offense* for which we suffer through Adam, with the many offenses from the guilt of which Christ delivers us. Luther, Beza, Olshausen, Rothe, and others. take *enoV* as neuter, one *offense*. "A judgment to condemnation" is a Hebraic or Hellenistic idiom, for a condemnatory judgment, or sentence of condemnation. 18 The word *krima*, rendered *judgment*, properly means the decision or sentence of a judge, and is here to be taken in its usual and obvious signification. It is then plainly stated that 'a sentence of condemnation has passed on all men on account of the one sin of Adam.' This is one of the clauses which can hardly be forced into the meaning that the sin of Adam was the occasion merely of men being condemned, because it was the means of their being led into sin. Here again we, have a mere exegetical question to decide; not a matter of theory or deduction, but simply of exposition. What does the phrase 'a sentence of condemnation by, or for one offense,' in this connection, mean? The common answer to this question is, It means that the one offense was the ground of the sentence. This answer, for the following reasons, appears to be correct:

1. It is the simple and obvious meaning of the terms. To say *a sentence is for an offense*, is, in ordinary language, to say that it is on account of the offense; and not that the offense is the cause of something else, which is the ground of the sentence. Who, uninfluenced by theological prejudice, would imagine that the apostle, when he says that condemnation for the offense of one man has passed on all men, means that the sin of Adam was the occasion of our sins, on account of which we are condemned? The preposition (*ek*), here translated *by*, expresses properly the idea of the origin of one thing from another; and is, therefore, used to indicate almost any relation in which a cause may stand to an effect. The logical character of this relation depends, of course, on the nature of the subject spoken of. In the phrases "faith is by hearing" (*ex akohV*), chap. 10:17; "by this craft (*ek tauthV thV ergasiaV*) we have our wealth," Acts 19:25; "our sufficiency is of God" (*ek tou Qeou*), 2 Corinthians 3:5; and a multitude of similar cases, the general idea of causation is expressed, but its precise character differs according to the nature of the subject. In the former of these examples the word indicates the instrumental, in the latter the efficient cause. But when it is said that "a man is not justified by works" (*ex ergwn*), Galatians 2:16; that the purpose of election "is not of works," Romans 9:11; that our salvation is not "by works of righteousness (*ex ergwn twv en dikaiosunh*), which we have done," Titus 3:5; and in a hundred similar examples, the preposition expresses the ground or reason. We are not elected, or justified, or saved on account of our works. In like manner, when it is said we are condemned *by*, or *for* the offense of one, and that we are justified for the righteousness of another, the meaning obviously is, that it is *on account* of the offense we are condemned, and *on account* of the righteousness we are justified. If it is true, therefore, as is so often asserted, that the apostle here, and throughout this passage, states the fact merely that the offense of

Adam has led to our condemnation, without explaining the *mode* in which it has produced this result, it must be because language cannot express the idea. The truth is, however, that when he says "the sentence was by one offense" (to *krima ex enoV*), he expresses the mode of condemnation just as clearly as he denies one *mode* of justification by saying it "is not by works;" and as he affirms another by saying it is "by the righteousness of Christ."

2. This interpretation is not only the simple and natural meaning of the words in themselves considered, but is rendered necessary by the context. We have, in this verse, the idea of pardon on the one hand, which supposes that of condemnation on the other. If the latter clause of the verse means, as is admitted, that we are pardoned for many offenses, the former must mean that we are condemned for one.

3. The whole force of the contrast lies in this very idea. The antithesis in this verse is evidently between the *one offense* and the *many offenses*. To make Paul say that the offense of Adam was the means of involving us in a multitude of crimes, from all of which Christ saves us, is to make the evil and the benefit exactly tantamount: 'Adam leads us into the offenses from which Christ delivers us.' Here is no contrast and no superiority. Paul, however, evidently means to assert that the evil from which Christ saves us, is far greater than that which Adam has brought upon us. According to the simple and natural interpretation of the verse, this idea is retained: 'Adam brought the condemnation of *one* offense only; Christ saves us from that of *many*.'

4. Add to these considerations the obvious meaning of the corresponding clauses in the other verses, especially in ver. 19, and the design of the apostle in the whole passage, so often referred to, and it seems scarcely possible to resist the evidence in favor of this view of the passage.

5. This interpretation is so clearly the correct one, that it is conceded by commentators and theologians of every shade of doctrine. "Justly indeed," says Koppe, "on account of one offense, many are subjected to punishment; but by divine grace many are freed from the punishment of many offenses." His own words are, "Jure quidem unius delicti causa poenas subeunt multi; ex gratia vero divina a multorum poenis liberantur beanturque multi." Flatt says, "Katakrima setzt als nicht nothwendig eigene Verschuldung voraus, so wie das gegentheilig dikaiwma nicht eigene dikaiosunh voraussetzt. Um einer einzigen Sunde willen wurden alle dazu verurtheilt, den qanatoV, (vers. 15, 17,) zu leiden." That is, 'Condemnation does not necessarily suppose personal transgression, any more than the opposite, justification, presupposes personal righteousness. On account of one single sin, all are condemned to suffer death.' So Storr: "Damnatio qua propter Adamum tenemur, unius peccati causa damnatio est." 'The condemnation which we suffer on account of Adam, is a condemnation on account of one sin.' Whitby expresses the meaning thus: "The judgment was by one *sin* to condemnation, we being all sentenced to death on account of Adam's sin."

*The free gift is of many of offenses unto justification*; that is, the free gift is justification. *The free gift, to de carisma, the act of grace* is antithetical to *krima, the judgment*; as the clauses *krima eiV katakrima* and *carisma eiV dikaiwma* (*sentence of condemnation* and *gratuitous justification*), are opposed to each other. The word *dikaiwma* is (1:32) *righteous judgment*; here, as antithetical to *katakrima, condemnation*. It means *justification*, which is a righteous judgment, or decision of a judge, pronouncing one to be just. This interpretation suits the signification of the word, and is to be preferred to making it mean *righteousness*, a sense which the word has in ver. 18, when opposed to *transgression*, and interchanged with *obedience*. This justification is *ek pollwn paraptwmatwn, from* many offenses. The relation indicated by *ek*, in the first clause, where it is said 'the sentence was *ex enoV*, for one offense,' is slightly different from what it is in the second clause, where it is said justification is *ek pollwn paraptwmatwn, from* many offenses. That is, sin stands in a different relation to condemnation from that which it sustains to justification; both, however, may be expressed by the same preposition. Christ has done far more than remove the curse pronounced on us for the *one* sin of Adam; he procures our justification from our own innumerable offenses. This is the main idea presented in this verse.

VERSE 17. *For if by one man's offense*, etc. The connection of this verse, as indicated by *for*, is with ver. 16: 'We are justified by Christ not only from the guilt of Adam's first sin, but from our own innumerable transgressions; for if death reigned over us for one offense, much more shall life reign through one who is none other and no less than Jesus Christ.' It is doubtful, however, whether this verse is a mere

amplification of the idea of ver. 15, which, in import and structure, it so much resembles; or whether the stress is to be laid on the last clause, *reigning in life*; so that the point of the difference between Adam and Christ, as here indicated, is, Christ not only delivers from death, but bestows eternal life; or, finally, whether the emphasis is to be laid on the word *receive*. The idea would then be, 'If we are thus subject to death for an offense, in which we had no personal concern, how much more shall we be saved by a righteousness which we voluntarily embrace.' This appears to be Calvin's view, who says: "Ut miseria peccati haereditate potiaris, satis est esse hominem, residet enim in carne et sanguine; ut Christi justitia fruaris, fidelem esse, necessarium est, quia fide acquiritur ejus consortium." The decision of these questions is not at all material to the general interpretation of the passage. Both of the ideas contained in the two latter views of the verse are probably to be included. *By one man's offense, tw tou enoV paraptwmati, by the offense of the one* (viz. Adam) *death reigned, i.e.,* triumphed over all men, *by one*. Here again the dative *paraptwmati* has a causal force, and the assertion of the apostle is, that the offense of Adam was the cause of death coming on all men. His sin was not the cause of death by any physical efficiency; nor as the mere occasion of leading men to incur by their own act the penalty of death; nor by corrupting the nature of man, which corruption is the ground of the inflicted curse; but, as is asserted in the preceding verse, because his sin was the ground of the judicial condemnation, *to krima eiV katakrima*, which passed on all mankind. If that is so, *much more*, says the apostle, *shall they which receive; oi lambanonteV* may be taken substantively, *the receivers*; or the present participle, *those receiving*, is used to express the condition on which the enjoyment of the blessing is suspended. *The abundance of grace*, the abounding grace, the grace which, in ver. 15, is said (*eperisseuse*) *hath abounded* towards us. This grace is the unmerited love of God, which is the source of the *gift of righteousness, dwrea thV dikaiosunhV, i.e.,* righteousness is the gift offered and received. That righteousness here does not mean holiness, is evident from the constant use of the word by Paul in a different sense in this epistle; from the fact that it is pardon, justification, justifying righteousness, not sanctification, that Paul in the context represents as the blessing received from Christ; and because it is in this verse opposed to the reigning of death, or state of condemnation on account of the offense of Adam. Professor Stuart, therefore, in accordance with the great majority of commentators, very correctly states the sentiment of the verse thus: "For if all are in a state of condemnation by reason of the offense of one, much more shall those towards whom abundance of mercy and pardoning grace are shown, be redeemed from a state of condemnation, and advanced to a state of happiness." The general sentiment of the verse is thus correctly exhibited; but some of the more prominent terms do not appear to have their full force assigned to them. *They which receive the abundant grace*, expresses more than that this grace is manifested to them; all such do not reign in life. This phrase evidently implies the voluntary reception of the offered boon. *The gift of righteousness*, too, is something more than pardoning grace. It is that which is expressed in ver. 15, by the *free gift*; and in ver. 16, by *the free gift unto justification*. It is, therefore, the gift of justification; or what is but another method of stating the same idea, it is the righteousness of Christ by which we are justified, since the gift of justification includes the gift of Christ's righteousness. The meaning of the verse consequently is, 'If on account of the offense of one man we are condemned, much more shall those who receive the righteousness graciously offered to them in the gospel, not only be delivered from condemnation, but also reign in life by one, Jesus Christ; that is, be gloriously exalted in the participation of that life of holiness and communion with God which is the end of our being. *By one, Jesus Christ*. As it was by one man, antecedently to any concurrence of our own, that we were brought into a state of condemnation, so it is by one man, without any merit of our own, that we are delivered from this state. If the one event has happened, much more may we expect the other to occur. If we are thus involved in the condemnation of a sin in which we had no personal concern, much more shall we, who voluntarily receive the gift of righteousness, be not only saved from the consequences of the fall, but be made partakers of eternal life.

VERSE 18. *Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came on all men to condemnation; even so*, etc. The words *ara ou+n (therefore)* are the inferential particles so often used in Paul's epistles, at the beginning of a sentence, contrary to the ordinary classical usage - 7:3, 25; 8:12; 9:16, etc. They frequently serve to introduce a summation of what had previously been said. The inference from the whole discussion, from the beginning of the epistle to ver. 12 of this chapter, is introduced in that verse by *dia touto, wherefore*. It followed, from all the apostle had said of the method of justification through Jesus Christ, that there is a striking analogy between our fall in Adam and our restoration in Christ. The carrying out of this comparison was interrupted, in the first place, to prove, in vers. 13, 14, the position

assumed in ver. 12, that all men are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam; and, in the second place, to limit and explain the analogy asserted to exist between Christ and Adam, at the close of ver. 14. This is done in vers. 15-17. Having thus fortified and explained his meaning, the apostle now states the case in full. The word *therefore*, at the beginning of ver. 12, marks an inference from the whole doctrine of the epistle; the corresponding words here are also strictly inferential. It had been proved that we are justified by the righteousness of one man, and it had also been proved that we are under condemnation for the offense of one. *Therefore*, as we are condemned, even so are we justified.

It will be remarked, from the manner in which they are printed, that the words *judgment came*, in the first clause of this verse, and the *free gift came*, in the second, have nothing to answer to them in the original. That they are correctly and necessarily supplied, is obvious from a reference to ver. 16, where these elliptical phrases occur in full. The construction in the clauses (krima) eiV katakrima and (carisma) eiV dikaiwsin zwhV, is the same as in ver. 16. Judgment unto condemnation is a sentence of condemnation, and the free gift unto justification is gratuitous justification. The sentence is said to be di enoV paraptwmatw, *through the offense of one*, and the justification is di enoV dikaiwmatw, *through the righteousness of one*. In ver. 16, this word dikaiwma is rendered *justification*, because it is there in antithesis to katakrima, *condemnation*; it is here properly rendered *righteousness*, because it is in antithesis to paraptwma, *offense*, and because what is here expressed by dikaiwma is in ver. 19 expressed by upakoh, *obedience*. This explanation is consistent with the signification of the word which means a righteous thing, whether it be an act, a judgment, or an ordinance. In Revelation 19:8, ta dikaiwmata twn agiwn is correctly rendered *the righteousness* of the saints. Luther translates the word in the passage before us, *Gerechtigkeit*, agreeing with our translators. Calvin renders it *justificatio*, 'by the *justification* of one.' In this interpretation many of the modern commentators concur. The principal argument for this explanation of the word is, that it is used in that sense in ver. 16; but there, as just remarked, it is opposed to katakrima, *condemnation*, while here it is opposed to paraptwma, *offense*. As the word may mean either *justification* or *righteousness*, that sense should be adopted which suits the immediate context. Many of the older theologians render it *satisfaction*; according to the Aristotelian definition, dikaiwma to epanorqwma tou adikhmatoV. This gives a good sense: 'By the *satisfaction* of one, the free gift has come on all men unto justification of life.' But this, although in accordance with the strict classical use of the word, is not the sense in which it is used in the Bible, and it is not so suitable to the context.

Instead of rendering di enoV paraptwmatw, *by the offense of one*, and di enoV dikaiwmatw, *by the righteousness of one*, a large class of commentators render them, 'by *one* offense,' and 'by *one* righteousness.' This does not materially alter the sense, and it is favored by the absence of the article, before enoV. In vers. 17, 19, it is tou enoV, *the one*. In favor of the version in our English translation, however, it may be urged:

1. That enoV, throughout the whole context in vers. 12, 15, 17, 19, is masculine, except in ver. 16, where it is opposed to the neuter pollwn. The omission of the article is sufficiently accounted for from the fact that *the one* intended, viz. Adam, had been before distinctly designated.
2. The comparison is between Adam and Christ, rather than between the sin of the one and the righteousness of the other.
3. The expression, *one righteousness*, is awkward and unusual; and if enoV dikaiwmatw be rendered *one righteousness act*, then it is inappropriate, inasmuch as we are not justified by one act of Christ, but by his whole life of obedience and suffering.
4. The natural opposition between *one* and all, requires enoV to be masculine: 'It was by the offense, of *one* man that *all* men were condemned.'

That the apostle here again teaches that there is a causal relation between the sin of Adam and the condemnation of his race, cannot be denied. The only possible question is, What is the nature of that relation, as expressed by dia? It was di enoV paraptwmatw, '*by* the offense of one that judgment came upon all men.' Does this mean that the offense of one was simply the occasion of all being condemned, or that it was the ground or reason of their condemnation? It is of course admitted that the proper force of dia with the genitive is, *by means of*, and with the accusative, *on account of*. As the genitive and not the

accusative is here used, it might seem that the apostle designedly avoided saying that all were condemned (*dia to paraptwma tou enoV*), *on account of the offense of one*. But there is no necessity for departing from the ordinary force of the preposition with the genitive, in order to justify the interpretation given above. The relation of a means to an end, depends on the nature of that means. To say that condemnation is *through*, or by means of an offense, is to say that the offense is the rational or judicial means, *i.e.* the ground of the condemnation. No man doubts that when, in ver. 12, the apostle says, that death was (*dia thV amartiaV*) *by means of sin*, he means that it was on account of sin. This is not a solitary case. In chap. 3:24, we are said to be justified (*dia thV apolutrwsenV*) *through the redemption* of Christ, *i.e.* by means of the redemption; but the ransom paid by Christ, in being the means was the ground of our redemption. So in the familiar phrases, "through his blood," Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20; "through his death," Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:22; "by his cross," Ephesians 2:16; "by the sacrifice of himself," Hebrews 9:26; "through the offering of the body of Jesus," and in many similar expressions the preposition retains its proper force with the genitive, as, indicating the means, and yet the means, from the nature of the case, is, the ground or reason. Thus also, in this immediate connection, we have, the expressions, "*by* the righteousness of one" all are justified, and "*by* the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We have, therefore, in this single passage, no less than three cases, vers. 12, 18, 19, in which this preposition with the genitive indicates such a means to an end, as the ground or reason on account of which something is given or performed. All this is surely sufficient to prove that it *may*, in the case before us, express the ground why the sentence of condemnation has passed on all men. That such, in this connection, must be its meaning, appears,

1. From the nature of the subject spoken of. To say that one man has been corrupted by another, may indeed express very generally, that one was the cause of the corruption of the other, without giving any information as to the mode in which the result was secured. But to say that a man was justified by means of a good action, or that he was condemned by means of a bad one; or plainer still, in Paul's own language, that a condemnatory sentence came upon him by means of that action; according to all common rules of interpretation, naturally means that such action was the reason of the sentence.
2. From the antithesis. If the phrase, "by the righteousness of one all are justified," means as is admitted, that this righteousness is the ground of our justification, the opposite clause, "by the offense of one all are condemned," must have a similar meaning.
3. The point of the comparison, as frequently remarked before, lies in this very idea. The fact that Adam's sin was the occasion of our sinning, and thus incurring the Divine displeasure, is no illustration of the fact that Christ's righteousness, and not our own merit, is the ground of our acceptance. There would be some plausibility in this interpretation, if it were the doctrine of the gospel that Christ's righteousness is the occasion of our becoming holy, and that on the ground of this personal holiness we are justified. But this not being the case, the interpretation in question cannot be adopted in consistency with the design of the apostle, or the common rules of exposition.
4. This clause is nearly identical with the corresponding one of ver. 16, "the judgment was by one (offense) to condemnation." But that clause, as shown above, is made, almost by common consent, to mean that the offense was the ground of the condemnatory sentence. Such, therefore, must be the meaning of the apostle in this verse; compare also vers. 15, 17, 19.

The second question of importance respecting this verse is, whether the *all men* of the second clause is coextensive with the *all men* of the first. Are the *all* who are justified for the righteousness of Christ, the *all* who are condemned for the sin of Adam? In regard to this point, it may be remarked, in the first place, that no inference can be fairly drawn in favor of an affirmative answer to this question, from the mere universality of the expression. Nothing is more familiar to the readers of the Scriptures than that such universal terms are to be limited by the nature of the subject or the context. Thus John 3:26, it is said of Christ, "all men come to him;" John 12:32, Christ says, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Thus the expressions, "all the world should be taxed," "all Judea," "all Jerusalem," must, from the nature of the case, be limited. In a multitude of cases, the words *all*, *all things*, mean the *all* spoken of in the context, and not all, without exception; see Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 51; 2 Corinthians 5:14, etc.

2. This limitation is always implied when the Scriptures elsewhere speak of a necessary condition connected with the blessing to which all are said to attain. It is everywhere taught that faith is necessary to justification; and, therefore, when it is said "all are justified," it must mean all believers. "By him," says the apostle, "all that believe are justified from all things," etc. Acts 13:39.

3. As if to prevent the possibility of mistake, Paul, in ver. 17, says it is those who "receive the gift of righteousness" that reign in life.

4. Even the *all men*, in the first clause, must be limited to those descended from Adam "by ordinary generation." It is not absolutely all. The man Christ Jesus must be excepted. The plain meaning is, all connected with Adam, and all connected with Christ.

5. A reference to the similar passage in 1 Corinthians 15:22, confirms this interpretation, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" that is, shall be made partakers of glorious resurrection and of eternal life. Thus the original word (*zwopoihqhsontai*,) and the context require the latter clause of that verse to be understood. The *all* there intended are immediately called "they that are Christ's," ver. 23, *i.e.* all connected with him, and not numerically the *all* that die in Adam.

6. This interpretation is necessary, because it is impossible, with any regard to scriptural usage or truth, to carry the opposite interpretation through. In this whole passage there are two classes of persons spoken of - those connected with Adam, and those connected with Christ. Of the former it is said "they die," ver. 15; "they are condemned," vs. 16, 18; "they are made sinners," ver. 19, by the offense of one man. Of the latter it is said, that to them "the grace of God and the gift by grace hath abounded," ver. 15; that "they are freely justified from many offenses," vs. 16, 18; that "they shall reign in life through Christ Jesus," ver. 17; that "they are regarded and treated as righteous," ver. 19. If these things can be said of all men, of impenitent sinners and hardened reprobates, what remains to be said of the people of God? It is not possible so to eviscerate these declarations as to make them contain nothing more than that the chance of salvation is offered to all men. To say that a man is justified, is not to say that he has the opportunity of justifying himself; and to say that a man shall reign in life, is not to say he may possibly be saved. Whoever announces to a congregation of sinners, that they are all justified, they are all constituted righteous, they all have the justification of life? The interpretation which requires all these strong and plain declarations to be explained in a sense which they confessedly have nowhere else in the Bible, and which makes them mean hardly anything at all, is at variance with every sound principle of construction. If the *all* in the latter part of the verse is co-extensive with the *all* in the former, the passage of necessity teaches universal salvation; for it is impossible that to *be justified, constituted righteous*, can mean simply that justification is offered to all men. The *all* who are justified are saved. If therefore the *all* means, all men, the apostle teaches that all men are saved. And this is the use to which many Universalists have put the passage. As, however, not only the Scriptures generally, but Paul himself, distinctly teach that all men are not to be saved, as in 2 Thessalonians 1:9, this interpretation cannot be admitted by any who acknowledge the inspiration of the Bible. It is moreover, an unnatural interpretation, even if the attention be limited to this one passage; because, as death on account of Adam supposes union with Adam, so life on account of Christ supposes union with Christ. It is all who are in Adam who are condemned for his offense, and the all who are in Christ who are justified by his righteousness. The modern German commentators, even those who do not hesitate to differ from the apostle, admit this to be the meaning of the passage. Thus Meyer says, *Die tanteV anqrwpoi* in the first clause, are *die Gesamtheit der Adams-generation*, and in the second clause, *die Gesamtheit der Christus-generation*. Philippi says, "The limitation of the *panteV anqrwpoi* is of necessity to be assumed. It can only mean *all who believe....* The apostle views, on the one hand, the generation of those lost in Adam, and on the other, the generation of those saved in Christ."

VERSE 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* This verse presents the doctrine of the preceding one in a somewhat different form. As in the doctrine of justification, there are the two ideas of the ascription of righteousness, and treating as righteous; and in the doctrine of the fall, the ascription of guilt (legal responsibility,) and the treating all men as guilty; so either of these ideas is frequently presented more prominently than the other. In ver. 18, it is the latter, in each case, which is made most conspicuous, and in ver. 19, the former. In ver. 18, it is our being *treated* as sinners for the sin of Adam, and our being *treated* as righteous for the

righteousness of Christ, that is most prominently presented. In ver. 19, on the contrary, it is our being *regarded* as sinners for the disobedience of Adam, and our being *regarded* as righteous for the obedience of Christ, that are rendered most conspicuous. Hence, Paul begins this verse with *for*: 'We are treated as sinners for the offense of Adam, for we are regarded as sinners on his account,' etc. Though the one idea seems thus to be the more prominent in ver 18, and the other in ver 19, yet it is only a greater degree of prominence to the one, and not the exclusion of the other, that is in either case intended.

*By one man's disobedience.* The disobedience here is evidently the first transgression of Adam, spoken of in ver. 16, as *the one offense*. The *obedience* of Christ here stands for all his work in satisfying the demands of the law; his obedience unto and in death; that by which the law was magnified and rendered honorable, as well as satisfied. From its opposition to the disobedience of Adam, his obedience, strictly speaking, rather than his sufferings, seems to be the prominent idea. "Paulus unterscheidet in dem Werke Christi diese beiden Momente, das Thun und das Leiden." *Neander*. 'Paul distinguishes, in the work of Christ, these two element - doing and suffering.' *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, etc., p. 543. In the paragraph which follows this statement, Neander presents the old distinction between the active and passive obedience of Christ, very nearly in its usual form. On p. 546, he says, "Dies heilige Leben Christi will God als That der ganzen Menschheit betrachten." 'God regards the holy life of Christ as the act of all men.' The words he many in both clauses of this verse, are obviously equivalent to the all of the corresponding clauses of ver 18, and are to be explained in the same manner.

The words *amartwloi katestaqhsan oi polloi*, rendered "the many were made sinners", properly mean, were set down in the rank or category of sinners. *Kaqisthmi* never, in the New Testament, means *to make*, in the sense of effecting, or causing a person or thing, to be in its character or nature other than it was before. *Kaqistanai tina amartwlon* does not mean *to make one sinful*, but to set him down as such, to regard or appoint him to be of that class. Thus, when Christ is said to have been "constituted the Son of God," he was not made Son, but declared to be such: "Who constituted thee a ruler or judge?" *i.e.* Who appointed thee to that office? So, "Whom his Lord made ruler." When, therefore, the apostle says, that the many were (*katestaqhsan*) constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam, it cannot mean, that the many thereby were rendered sinful, but that his disobedience was the ground of their being placed in the category of sinners. It constituted a good and sufficient reason for so regarding and treating them. The same remark applies, of course, to the other clause of this verse: *dikaioi katastaqhsontai oi polloi*. This cannot mean, that by the obedience of one the many shall be made holy. It can only mean, that the obedience of Christ was the ground on which the many are to be placed in the category of the righteous, *i.e.* shall be so regarded and treated. It is not our personal righteousness which makes us righteous, but the imputation of the obedience of Christ. And the sense in which we are here declared to be sinners, is not that we are such personally, (which indeed is true,) but by the imputation of Adam's disobedience.

Of course the several interpretations above mentioned are applied to this verse.

1. That the sin of Adam was the mere occasion of other men becoming sinners; whether this was by the force of example, or by an unfavorable change in their external circumstances, or in some other unexplained manner, being left undecided.
2. That in virtue of community, or numerical oneness of nature between Adam and his posterity, his act was strictly their act, and made them sinners as it made him a sinner.
3. That as the apostasy of Adam involved a corruption of nature, that corruption was transmitted to his descendants, by the general physical law of propagation.
4. That the sin of Adam was the judicial ground of the condemnation of his race. They were by his sin constituted sinners in a legal or forensic sense; as by the righteousness of Christ we are constituted legally righteous.

That this last is the true interpretation is plain,

1. Because it is in accordance with usage. *To make clean, to make unclean, to make righteousness, to make guilty*, are the constant expressions for regarding and treating as clean, unclean, righteous, or

unrighteous.

2. The expression, *to make sin*, and *to make righteousness*, occurring in a corresponding sense, illustrate and confirm this interpretation. Thus in 2 Corinthians 5:21, Christ is said to be "made sin," *i.e.*, regarded and treated as a sinner, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," *i.e.*, that we might be regarded and treated as righteous in the sight of God, on his account.

3. The antithesis is here so plain as to be of itself decisive. "To be made righteous" is, according to Professor Stuart, "to be justified, pardoned, regarded and treated as righteous." With what show of consistency then can it be denied that "to be made sinners," in the opposite clause, means to be regarded and treated as sinners? If one part of the verse speaks of justification, the other must speak of condemnation.

4. As so often before remarked, the analogy between the case of Adam and Christ requires this interpretation. If the first clause means either that the disobedience of Adam was the occasion of our committing sin, or that it was the cause of our becoming inherently corrupt, and on the ground of these sins, or of this corruption, being condemned; then must the other clause mean that the obedience of Christ is the cause of our becoming holy, or performing good works, on the ground of which we are justified. But this confessedly is not the meaning of the apostle. If then the same words, in the same connection, and the same grammatical construction, have the same meaning the interpretation given above must be correct.

5. The design of the apostle to illustrate the great doctrine of the gospel, that men, although in themselves ungodly, are regarded and treated as righteous for Christ's sake, demands this interpretation.

6. This view of the passage, so obviously required by the usage of the words and the context, is, as remarked above on ver. 16, adopted by commentators of every class, as to theological opinion. See the passages there quoted. "*The many* are here again *all*, who, from the opposition to the one, are in this place, as in ver. 15, denominated from their great number.

These have without exception become sinners ([amartwloi katestaqhsan](#)), not in reference to their own inward corruption, of which Paul is not here speaking, but in reference to their guilt (Strafwürdigkeit) and actual punishment on account of Adam's sin." 19 Even Flatt, whose general view of the passage would lead to a different interpretation, gives, as a correct exhibition of the meaning of the apostle, "As on account of the disobedience of one the many are treated as sinners, so on account of the obedience of one shall the many be treated as righteous." Storr also renders the first clause, "They were regarded and treated as sinners;" this, he says, must be its meaning, from its opposition to the words "were constituted righteous," which obviously express the idea of justification, and also from the use of the word *condemnation* in the corresponding clause of ver. 18. These writers are referred to rather than Calvinistic commentators, to shew how entirely destitute of foundation is the reproach, that the interpretation given above is the result of theological prejudice. The meaning then of the whole passage is this: BY ONE MAN sin entered into the world, or men were brought to stand in the relation of sinners to God; death consequently passed on all, because for the offense of that one man they were all regarded and treated as sinners. That this is really the case is plain, because the execution of the penalty of a law cannot be more extensive than its violation; and consequently, if all are subject to penal evils, all are regarded as sinners in the sight of God. This universality in the infliction of penal evil cannot be accounted for on the ground of the violation of the law of Moses, since men were subject to such evil before that law was given; nor yet on account of the violation of the more general law written on the heart, since even they are subject to this evil, who have never personally sinned at all. We must conclude, therefore, that men are regarded and treated as sinners on account of the sin of Adam. He is, therefore, a type of Christ. The cases, however, are not entirely analogous; for if it is consistent with the Divine character, that we should suffer for what Adam did, how much more may we expect to be made happy for what Christ has done! Besides, we are condemned for one sin only, on Adam's account; whereas Christ saves us not only from the evils consequent on that transgression, but also from the punishment of our own innumerable offenses. Now, if for the offense of one, death thus triumphs over all, how much more shall they who receive the grace of the gospel, not only be saved from evil, but reign in life through Christ Jesus! Wherefore, as on account of one the condemnatory sentence has passed on all the descendants of Adam, so on account of the

righteousness of one, gratuitous justification comes on all who receive the grace of Christ; for as on account of the disobedience of one we are regarded as sinners, so on account of the obedience of the other we are regarded as righteous. It may be proper to add a few remarks on the preceding interpretation of this whole section.

1. The first is, that the evidence of its correctness is cumulative, and is therefore not to be judged exclusively by what is said in favor of the view presented of any one of its parts. If it is *probable* that verse 12 asserts, that all men became subject to death on account of one man, this is rendered still plainer by the drift and force of vers. 13, 14; it is rendered almost certain by ver. 15, where it is asserted, that for the offense of one the many die; by ver. 16, where it is said that for one offense all are condemned; by ver. 17, which affirms again, that the ground of death's reigning over all is to be found in this one offense; and it would appear to be raised almost beyond the reach of doubt by ver. 18, where the words of ver. 16 are repeated, and the analogy with the method of our justification is expressly asserted; and by ver. 19, in which this same idea is reiterated in a form which seems to set all efforts at misunderstanding or misinterpretation at defiance.

2. The force of a remark previously made may now be more fully appreciated, viz., that the sentiment attributed to ver. 12, after having been proved in vers. 13, 14, is ever after assumed as the ground of illustrating the nature, and confirming the certainty of our justification. Thus, in ver. 16, **FOR IF** by the offense of one many be dead, etc.; and ver. 17, **FOR IF** by one man's offense, etc.; in ver. 18, **THEREFORE AS** by the offense of one all are condemned, *even so* by the righteousness of one all are justified; and, finally, in ver. 19, **FOR AS** by one man's disobedience, etc.

3. In connection with these remarks, it should be remembered that the interpretation given to the several clauses in this passage is the simple natural meaning of the words, as, with scarcely an exception, is admitted. The objections relied upon against it are almost exclusively of a theological rather than a philological or exegetical character. This interpretation, too, is perfectly consistent with itself, harmonious with the design of the apostle, and illustrative of the point which he proposed to explain. If all these separate sources of proof be properly considered and brought to bear, with their mutually sustaining force, on a candid mind, it can hardly fail to acknowledge that the commonly received view of this interesting portion of the word of God, is supported by an amount and force of evidence not easily overthrown or resisted.

4. This interpretation is old. It appears in the writings of the early Christian fathers; it has the sanction, in its essential features, of the great body of the Reformers; it has commanded the assent of men of all parties, and of every form of theological opinion. The modern Rationalist, certainly an impartial witness, who considers it a melancholy proof of the apostle's subjection to Jewish prejudices, unites with the devout and humble Christian in its adoption. An interpretation which has stood its ground so long and so firstly, and which has commended itself to minds to variously constituted, cannot be dismissed as a relic of a former age, or disparaged as the offspring of theological speculation.

5. Neither of the opposite interpretations can be consistently carried through. They are equally at variance with the design of the apostle, and the drift of his argument. They render the design and force of vers. 13, 14 either nugatory or unintelligible. They require the utmost violence to be done to the plainest rules of exposition; and the most unnatural interpretations to be given to the most perspicuous and important declarations of the apostle. Witness the assertion, that "receiving the abundance of grace and gift of righteousness," means to be brought under a dispensation of mercy; and that "to reign in life by one, Jesus Christ," is to be brought under a dispensation of life. Thus, too, "the free gift of justification of life has come upon all men," is made to mean that all are in a salvable state; and "all are constituted righteous," (*i.e.*, "justified, pardoned, regarded and treated as righteous,") is only to have the offer of pardon made to all. These are but a tithe of the exegetical difficulties attending the other interpretations of this passage, which make the reception of either the severest of all sacrifices to prejudice or authority.

**VERSE 20.** *Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound, etc.* Paul having shown that our justification was effected without the intervention of either the moral or Mosaic law, was naturally led to state the design and effect of the renewed revelation of the one, and the super induction of the other. *The law* stands here for the whole of the Old Testament economy, including the clear revelation of the

moral law, and all the institutions connected with the former dispensation. The main design and result of this dispensation, considered as *law*, that is, apart from the evangelical import of many of its parts, was *ina to paraptwma pleonash*, *that the offense might abound*. *The offense to paraptwma* is in the context used of the specific offense of Adam. But it is hard to see how the entrance of the law made the offense of Adam to abound, unless the idea is, that its dire effects were rendered more abundant. It is more probable that the apostle uses the word in a collective sense; compare Galatians 3:19. Agreeably to this view, the meaning of the clause is, that the great design of the law (in reference to justification) is to produce the knowledge and conviction of sin. Taking the word in its usual sense, the meaning is, that the result of the introduction of the law was the increase of sin. This result is to be attributed partly to the fact, that by enlarging the knowledge of the rule of duty, responsibility was proportionably increased, according to chap. 4:15, and partly to the consideration that the enmity of the heart is awakened by its operation, and transgressions actually multiplied, agreeably to chap. 7:8. Both views of the passage express an important truth, as the conviction of sin and its incidental increase are alike the result of the operation of the law. It seems, however, more in accordance with the apostle's object, and with the general, although not uniform force of the particle (*ina*) rendered *that*, to consider the clause as expressing the design, rather than the result simply of the giving of the law. The word *pareishlqen* does not mean simply *entered*, nor entered *between*, that is, came between Adam and Christ. This is indeed historically true, but it is not the meaning of the word, and therefore not the idea which the apostle intended to express. Nor does the word mean here, as in Galatians 2:4, entered *surreptitiously*, "crept in unawares," for this is not true. It rather means entered *thereto*, *i.e.*, as the same idea is expressed in Galatians 3:19, "it was added." It was superinduced on a plan already laid, and for a subordinate, although necessary purpose. It was not intended to give life, but to prepare men to receive Christ as the only source of righteousness and salvation.

*But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*. That is, great as is the prevalence of sin, as seen and felt in the light of God's holy law, yet over all this evil the grace of the gospel has abounded. The gospel or the grace of God has proved itself much more efficacious in the production of good, than sin in the production of evil. This idea is illustrated in the following verse. The words *ouV* and *ekei* have a local force. *Where, i.e.*, in the sphere in which sin abounded, there, in the same sphere, grace *superabounded*; *upereperisseuein* is superlative, and not comparative, and *perisseuein* is stronger than *pleonazein*, as *perisson* is more than *pleon*. The fact, therefore, of the triumph of grace over sin, is expressed in the clearest manner.

VERSE 21. *That as sin hath reigned unto death*, etc. *That, ina in order that*, as expressing the divine purpose. The design of God in permitting sin, and in allowing it to abound, was to bring good out of evil; to make it the occasion of the most wonderful display of his glory and grace, so that the benefits of redemption should infinitely transcend the evils of the apostasy. *Sin reigned, en tw qanatw* not *unto*, but *in death*, or *through* death. Death spiritual as well as temporal - evil in its widest sense, as the judicial consequence of sin, was the sphere in which the power or triumph of sin was manifested. *Even so might grace reign*, (*wsper - outw kai*,) *as* the one has happened, *so also* the other. The one is in order to the other. Grace is the unmerited love of God and its consequences. *It reigns, i.e.*, it is abundantly and effectively displayed, *unto eternal life*, (*eiV zwhn aiwnion*,) in securing as the result of its exercise, eternal life. This is done (*dia dikaiosunhV*;) *by means of righteousness*, and that righteousness is THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. As the triumph of sin over our race was through the offense of Adam, so the triumph of grace is through the righteousness of Christ. The construction of this passage, assumed in the above interpretation, is to be preferred to that which connects *dikaiousunhV eiV zwhn aiwnion*. 'righteousness *which is* unto eternal life,' because the antithesis is not between *death* and *righteousness*, but between *death* and *life*: 'Sin reigns in death, grace reigns unto life.' That the benefits of redemption shall far outweigh the evils of the fall, is here clearly asserted. This we can in a measure comprehend, because,

1. The number of the saved shall doubtless greatly exceed the number of the lost. Since the half of mankind die in infancy, and, according to the Protestant doctrine, are heirs of salvation; and since in the future state of the Church the knowledge of the Lord is to cover the earth, we have reason to believe that the lost shall bear to the saved no greater proportion than the inmates of a prison do to the mass of the community.

2. Because the eternal Son of God, by his incarnation and mediation, exalts his people to a far higher state of being than our race, if unfallen, could ever have attained.

3. Because the benefits of redemption are not to be confined to the human race. Christ is to be admired in his saints. It is through the Church that the manifold wisdom of God is to be revealed, throughout all ages, to principalities and powers. The redemption of man is to be the great source of knowledge and blessedness to the intelligent universe.

## DOCTRINE

I. The doctrine of imputation is clearly taught in this passage. This doctrine does not include the idea of a mysterious identity of Adam and his race; nor that of a transfer of the moral turpitude of his sin to his descendants. It does not teach that his offense was personally or properly the sin of all men, or that his act was, in any mysterious sense, the act of his posterity. Neither does it imply, in reference to the righteousness of Christ, that his righteousness becomes personally and inherently ours, or that his moral excellence is in any way transferred from him to believers. The sin of Adam, therefore, is no ground to us of remorse; and the righteousness of Christ is no ground of self-complacency in those to whom it is imputed. This doctrine merely teaches, that in virtue of the union, representative and natural, between Adam and his posterity, his sin is the ground of their condemnation, that is, of their subjection to penal evils; and that in virtue of the union between Christ and his people, his righteousness is the ground of their justification. This doctrine is taught almost in so many words in verses 12, 15-19. It is so clearly stated, so often repeated or assumed, and so formally proved, that very few commentators of any class fail to acknowledge, in one form or another, that it is the doctrine of the apostle.

It would be easy to prove that the statement of the doctrine just given is a correct exhibition of the form in which it was held by the great body of the Reformed Churches and divines. A few quotations from men of universally recognized authority, as competent witnesses on this subject, must suffice. Turretin (*Theol. Elench. Quaest. IX.*, p. 678) says, "Imputation is either of something foreign to us, or of something properly our own. Sometimes that is imputed to us which is personally ours; in which sense God imputes to sinners their transgressions. Sometimes that is imputed which is without us, and not performed by ourselves; thus the righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, and our sins are imputed to him, although he has neither sin in himself, nor we righteousness. Here we speak of the latter kind of imputation, not of the former, because we are treating of a sin committed by Adam, not by us." The ground of this imputation is the union between Adam and his posterity. This union is not a mysterious identity of person, but,

1. "Natural, as he is the father, and we are the children.

2. Political and forensic, as he was the representative head and chief of the whole human race. The foundation, therefore, of imputation is not only the natural connection which exists between us and Adam, since in that case all his sins might be imputed to us, but mainly the moral and federal, in virtue of which God entered into covenant with him as our head." Again, "We are constituted sinners in Adam in the same way in which we are constituted righteous in Christ." Again (Vol. 2., p. 707), *to impute*, he says, "is a forensic term, which is not to be understood physically of the infusion of righteousness, but judicially and relatively." Imputation does not alter the moral character; hence the same individual may, in different respects, be called both just and unjust: "For when reference is had to the inherent quality, he is called a sinner and ungodly; but when the external and forensic relation to Christ is regarded, he is pronounced just in Christ." "When God justifies us on account of the righteousness of Christ, his judgment is still according to truth; because he does not pronounce us just in ourselves subjectively, which would be false, but in another putatively and relatively." Tuckney (*Proelectiones*, p. 234), "We are counted righteous through Christ in the same manner that we are counted guilty through Adam. The latter is by imputation, therefore also the former." "We are not so foolish or blasphemous as to say, or even to think, that the imputed righteousness of Christ makes us formally and subjectively righteous;" see further quotations from this writer on chap. 4:5. Owen (in his work on *Justification*, p. 236 20 ) says, "Things which are not our own originally, inherently, may yet be imputed to us, *ex justitia*, by the rule of righteousness. And this may be done upon a double relation unto those whose they are,

1. Federal.

2. Natural.

Things done by one may be imputed unto others, *propter relationem foederalem*, because of a covenant relation between them. So the sin of Adam was imputed unto all his posterity. And the ground hereof is, that we stood in the same covenant with him who was our head and representative." On page 242 21 , he says, "This imputation (of Christ's righteousness) is not the transmission or transfusion of the righteousness of another into them which are to be justified, that they should become perfectly and inherently righteous thereby. For it is impossible that the righteousness of one should be transfused into another to become his subjectively and inherently." Again, page 307 22 , "As we are made guilty by Adam's actual sin, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us; so are we made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us." On page 468 23 , he says, "Nothing is intended by the imputation of sin unto any, but the rendering them justly obnoxious unto the punishment due unto that sin. As the not imputing of sin is the freeing of men from being subject or liable to punishment." It is one of his standing declarations, "To be *alienae culpa reus*, MAKES NO MAN A SINNER." Knapp (in his *Lectures on Theology*, sect. 76) says, in stating what the doctrine of imputation is, "God's imputing the sin of our first parents to their descendants, amounts to this: God punishes the descendants on account of the sin of their first parents." This he gives as a mere historical statement of the nature of the doctrine, and the form in which its advocates maintained it. Zachariae (*Bib. Theologie*, Vol. 2., p. 394) says, "If God allows the punishment which Adam incurred, to come on all his descendants, he imputes his sin to them all. And, in this sense, Paul maintains that the sin of Adam is imputed to all, because the punishment of the one offense of Adam has come upon all." And Bretschneider, as quoted above, on chap. 4:3, when stating the doctrine of the Reformers, as presented in the various creeds published under their authority, says, that they regarded justification, which includes the idea of imputation, as a forensic or judicial act of God, by which the relation of man to God, and not the man himself, was changed. And imputation of righteousness they described as "that judgment of God, according to which he treats us as though we had not sinned, but had fulfilled the law, or as though the righteousness of Christ was ours." This view of justification they constantly maintained in opposition to the Papists, who regarded it as a moral change, consisting in what they called the infusion of righteousness.

Though this view of the nature of imputation, both of sin and righteousness, is so familiar, yet as almost all the objections to the doctrine are founded on the assumption that it proceeds on the ground of a mysterious identity between Adam and his race on the one hand, and Christ and his people on the other; and that it implies the transfer of the moral character of the acts imputed, it seemed necessary to present some small portion of the evidence which might be adduced, to show that the view of the subject presented above is that which has always been held by the great body of the Reformed Churches. The objections urged against this doctrine at the present day, are precisely the same which were urged by the Roman Catholics against the Reformers; and the answers which we are obliged to repeat, are the same which the Reformers and their successors gave to those with whom they had to contend. It will be seen how large a portion of the objections are answered by the mere statement of the doctrine.

1. It is objected that this doctrine "contradicts the essential principles of moral consciousness. We never did, and never can feel guilty of another's act, which was done without any knowledge or concurrence of our own. We may just as well say we can appropriate to ourselves, and make our own, the righteousness of another, as his unrighteousness. But we can never, in either case, even force ourselves into a consciousness that any act is really our own, except one in which we have had a personal and voluntary concern. A transfer of moral turpitude is just as impossible as a transfer of souls; nor does it lie within the boundary of human effort, that we should repent of Adam's sin." *Prof. Stuart*, p. 239. This idea is repeated very frequently in his commentary on this passage, and the *Excursus*, 4, 5. "To say Adam's disobedience was the occasion, or ground, or instrumental cause of all men becoming sinners, and was thus an evil to them all, and to say that his disobedience was *personally theirs*, is saying two very different things. I see no way in which this last assertion can ever be made out by philology." Compare Mr. Barnes, p. 119. Professor Stuart further says, page , that if verse 12 speaks of the imputation of Adam's sin, it could not be said men had *not* sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression. "So far from this must it

be, that Adam's sin is their very sin, and the ground why death reigns over them." Mr. Barnes says, page 119, "If the doctrine of imputation be true, they not only *had* sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, but had *sinned the very identical sin*. It was precisely *like* him. It was the very thing itself." In like manner, on page 96, he says, "But if the doctrine of the Scriptures was, that the entire righteousness of Christ was set over to them, was really and truly theirs, and was transferred to them in any sense with what propriety could the apostle say that God justified the ungodly?" etc. "They are eminently pure, and have a claim not of grace, but of debt to the very highest rewards of heaven." It will be at once perceived that these and similar objections are all founded on a misapprehension of the doctrine in question. They are all directed against the ideas of identity of person, and transfer of moral character, neither of which is, as we have seen, included in it; they are, moreover, not only inconsistent with the true nature of the doctrine, but with the statements and arguments of these writers themselves. Thus Professor Stuart, page 239, says, "That 'the son shall not die for the iniquity of the father,' is as true as that 'the father shall not die for the iniquity of the son;' as God has most fully declared in Ezekiel 18." According to this view of the subject, "for the son to die for the iniquity of the father," is to have the sin of the father imputed to him, or laid to his charge. The ideas of personal identity and transfer of moral character are necessarily excluded from it, by its opponents themselves, who thus virtually admit the irrelevancy of their previous objections. The fact is, that imputation is never represented as affecting the moral character, but merely the relation of men to God and his law. To impute sin is to regard and treat as a sinner; and to impute righteousness is to regard and treat as righteous.

2. It is said that this doctrine is nothing but a theory, an attempt to explain what the apostle does not explain, a philosophical speculation, etc. This again is a mistake. It is neither a theory nor a philosophical speculation, but the statement of a scriptural fact in scriptural language. Paul says, For the offense of one man all men are condemned; and for the righteousness of one all are regarded and treated as righteous. This is the whole doctrine.

3. It is asserted that the word *impute* is never used in the Bible, in reference to reckoning or charging upon a man any thing which is not strictly and properly his own. But this has been shown to be incorrect; see chap. 4:3. It is used twice in chap. 4, of "imputing righteousness" to those without works, to the ungodly, etc. But if the objection were well founded, it would be destitute of any force; for if the word means so to ascribe an action to a man as to treat him as the author of it, it would be correct and scriptural to say that the sin or righteousness of one man is imputed to another, when that sin or righteousness is made the ground of the condemnation or justification of any other than its personal authors.

4. It is denied that Adam was the representative of his posterity, because he is not so called in Scripture, and because a representative supposes the consent of those for whom he acts. But this a mistake. It is rare that a representative is appointed by the choice of all on whom his acts are binding. This is the case in no country in the world; and nothing is more common than for a parent or court to appoint a guardian to act as the representative of a minor. If it is competent for a parent to make such an appointment, it is surely proper in God. It is a mere question of fact. If the Scriptures teach that Adam was on trial not for himself only, but also for his posterity; if the race fell when he fell; then do they teach that he was in fact and form their representative. That they do teach the fact supposed, can scarcely be denied; it is asserted as often as it is stated that the sin of Adam was the ground of the condemnation of men.

5. It is said that the doctrine of imputation is inconsistent with the first principles of justice. This objection is only of force against the mistaken view given above. It has no weight against the true doctrine. It is on all hands admitted that the sin of Adam involved the race in ruin. This is the whole difficulty. How is it to be reconciled with the divine character, that the fate of unborn millions should depend on an act over which they had not the slightest control, and in which they had no agency? This difficulty presses the opponents of the doctrine more heavily than its advocates. The former have no advantage over the latter; not in the amount of evil inflicted, because they make the evil directly indicted on account of Adam's sin much greater than the others do; not in the provision made for the redemption of the race from this evil, because both maintain that the work of Christ brings the offer of life to the whole race while it infallibly secures the salvation of a multitude which no man can number. The opinion of those writers not only has no advantage over the common doctrine, but it is encumbered with difficulties peculiar to itself. It

represents the race as being involved in ruin and condemnation, without having the slightest probation. According to one view, they "are born with a corrupt disposition, and with the loss of righteousness, and subjection to pain and woe," by a mere arbitrary appointment of God, and without a trial, either personally, or by a representative. According to another view, men are born without any such corrupt disposition, but in a state of indifference, and are placed on their probation at the very first moment of moral agency, and under a constitution which infallibly secures their becoming sinners. According to the realistic doctrine, revived by the modern speculative theologians of the school of Schleiermacher, humanity existed as a generic life in Adam. The acts of that life were therefore the acts of all the individuals to whom, in the development of the race, the life itself was communicated. All men consequently sinned in Adam, by an act of self-determination. They are punished, therefore, not for Adam's act, but for their own; not simply for their innate depravity, nor for their personal acts only, but for the act which they committed thousands of years ago, when their nature, *i.e.* their intelligence and will, were determined to evil in the person of Adam. This is avowedly a philosophical doctrine. This doctrine assumes the objective reality of human nature as a generic life. It takes for granted that persons can act before they exist, or that actual sin can be committed by an impersonal nature, which is a contradiction in terms, inasmuch as an intelligent, voluntary act is an act of a person. If *we* actually sinned in Adam, than *we* (as persons) were then in conscious being. This doctrine is directly opposed to Scripture, which expressly teaches that the sin of Adam, and not our personal sin, was the original ground of condemnation; as the righteousness of Christ, and not our personal righteousness, is the ground of our justification. No less clearly does the Bible condemn the other doctrines just mentioned. Paul represents the evils which came on men on account of the offense of Adam, as a condemnation; not as an arbitrary infliction, nor as a merely natural consequence. We are bound to acquiesce in the truth as taught in the Scriptures, and not to introduce explanations and theories of our own. The denial of this doctrine involves also the denial of the scriptural view of atonement and justification. It is essential to the scriptural form of these doctrines, that the idea of legal substitution should be retained. Christ bore our sins; our iniquities were laid upon him, which, according to the true meaning of scriptural language, can only signify that he bore the punishment of those sins; not the same evils, indeed either in kind or degree; but still penal, because judicially inflicted for the support of law. It matters little whether a debt be paid in gold or copper, provided it is canceled. And as a comparatively small quantity of the former is of equal value with a great deal of the latter, so the temporary sufferings of Christ are of more value for all the purposes of punishment, than the eternal sufferings of all mankind. It is then no objection to the scriptural doctrine of sacrifice and atonement, that Christ did not suffer the same kind or degree of evil, which those for whom he died must have endured in their own persons. This idea of legal substitution enters also into the scriptural view of justification. In justification, according to Paul's language, God imputes righteousness to the ungodly. This righteousness is not their own; but they are regarded and treated as righteous on account of the obedience of Christ. That is, his righteousness is so laid to their account, or imputed to them, that they are regarded and treated as if it were their own; or "as if they had kept the law." This is the great doctrine of the Reformation, Luther's *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*. The great question between the Papists and Protestants was, whether men are justified on account of inherent or imputed righteousness. For the latter, the Protestants contended as for their lives, and for the life of the Church. See the passages quoted above on chap. 4:3, and the Confessions of that period 24 .

6. As the term *death* is used for any and every evil judicially inflicted as the punishment of sin, the amount and nature of the evil not being expressed by the word, it is no part of the apostle's doctrine, that eternal misery is inflicted on any man for the sin of Adam, irrespective of inherent depravity or actual transgression. It is enough for all the purposes of his argument, that this sin was the ground of the loss of the divine favor, the withholding of divine influence, and the consequent corruption of our nature. Turretin *Theologia Elenct.*, vol. 1, page 680: "Poena quam peccatum Adami in nos accersit, vel est *privativa*, vel *positiva*. Quoad primam dieimus Adami peccatum nobis imputari immediate ad poenam privativam, quia est causa privationis justitiae originalis, et sic corruptionem antecedere debet saltem ordine naturae: Sed quoad posteriorem potest dici imputari mediate quoad poenam positivam, quia isti poenae obnoxii non sumus, nisi postquam nati et corrupti sumus."

7. It is said that it is inconsistent with the omniscience and veracity of God, and consequently with his nature as God, that he should regard and treat as sinners those who are not sinners, or those as righteous

who are in fact unrighteous. God's judgments are according to truth, and therefore must be determined by the real, subjective character of those whom they concern. This difficulty arises simply from the ambiguity of language. The words *sinner, just, unjust, righteous, and unrighteous*, in English, and the corresponding words in other languages, are familiarly and properly used in two distinct senses. They sometimes express moral character, and sometimes legal relations. A man may therefore be just and unjust, righteous and unrighteous at the same time. A criminal who has satisfied the demands of justice, is just in the eye of the law; he cannot be again or further punished for his offense, and is entitled to all his rights as a citizen, although morally unrighteous. The sinner, and every sinner whom God accepts or pronounces righteous for the righteousness of Christ, feels himself to be in his own person most unrighteous. God's judgment, in pronouncing him righteous, is none the less according to truth. He does not pronounce the sinner subjectively righteous, which he is not, but forensically righteous, which he is, because Christ has satisfied the demands of justice on his behalf. In like manner, when our blessed Lord, although he knew no sin, is said to have been made sin, it only means that he assumed the responsibility of meeting the requirements of the law in our place; so that his sufferings were not chastisements or calamities, but of the nature of punishment. He was condemned for our sakes, as we are justified for his. It is no impeachment, therefore, of the omniscience or veracity of God, when he holds us as guilty on account of Adam's sin, as he does not pronounce us morally criminal for his offense, but simply declares that for the ends of justice we are involved in his condemnation.

8. Perhaps the most operative of all objections against the doctrine of imputation is founded on the assumption that moral character must be self-originated. It is assumed that inherent, hereditary depravity in man cannot have the nature of sin and involve guilt, unless it is due to his own act. This principle, however, is not only erroneous, but contrary to the plainest and most universally received doctrines of the Bible. It is the intuitive judgment of men that moral qualities owe their character to their nature, and not to their origin. A holy being is recognized as holy, whether his holiness be concreated, infused, or self-originated. All churches believe that Adam was created holy; all Churches believe that holiness is the product of divine power in regeneration; and all Churches, that is, the Latin, Lutheran, and Reformed, acknowledge that innate depravity is truly sin, although anterior to any act of self-determination on our part to evil. It is not necessary, therefore, to assume that if men are born in sin, their sinfulness is to be referred to their personal act. It may, consistently with the common judgment of men, and with the faith of the Church universal, be a penal consequence of the sin of Adam.

II. Whatever evil the Scriptures represent as coming upon us on account of Adam, they regard as penal; they call it death, which is the general term by which any penal evil is expressed. It is not however the doctrine of the Scriptures, nor of the Reformed Churches, nor of our standards, that the corruption of nature of which they speak, is any depravation of the soul or an essential attribute, or the infusion of any positive evil. "Original sin," as the Confessions of the Reformers maintain, "is not the substance of man, neither his soul nor body; nor is it anything infused into his nature by Satan, as poison is mixed with wine; it is not an essential attribute, but an accident 25, *i.e.* something which does not exist of itself, an incidental quality," etc. *Bretschneider*, vol. 2, p. 30. These Confessions teach that original righteousness was lost, as a punishment of Adam's sin, and by that defect, the tendency to sin, or corrupt disposition, or corruption of nature is occasioned 26. Though they speak of original sin as being, first, negative, *i.e.* the loss of righteousness; and secondly, positive, or corruption of nature; yet by the latter, they state, is to be understood, not the infusion of anything in itself sinful, but an actual tendency or disposition to evil, resulting from the loss of righteousness. This is clearly expressed in the quotation just made. It is therefore in perfect consistency with his own views, and with those of the Protestant creeds, that President Edwards teaches, in his book on Original sin, "It is agreeable to the sentiments of the best divines, that all sin comes from a defective or privative cause," (p. 28;) and that he argues against the idea of any evil quality being infused, implanted, or wrought into our nature by any positive cause or influence whatever, either of God or the creature, etc. With equal consistency and propriety, he goes on to state that "the absence of positive good principles," and "the withholding of special divine influence," and "the leaving of the common principles of self-love, natural appetite, which were in man in innocence," are sufficient to account for all the corruption which appears among men. Goodwin, one of the strictest Puritanical divines, (vol. 3, p. 323,) has a distinct chapter to prove, "that there is no necessity of asserting original sin to be a positive quality in our souls, since the privation of righteousness is enough to infect the soul with all that is evil." Yet he, in common with the Reformers, represents original sin as having a positive as well

as a negative side. This, however, results from the active nature of the soul. If there is no tendency to the love and service of God, there is, from this very defect, a tendency to self and sin. How large a portion of the objections to the doctrine of original sin is founded on the idea of its being an evil positively infused into our nature, "as poison is mixed with wine," may be inferred from the exclamation of Professor Stuart, in reference to the passage just quoted from President Edwards. He says it is "a signal instance, indeed, of the triumph of the spontaneous feelings of our nature over the power of *system!*" It would seem from this, that he has no objection to the doctrine as thus stated. And yet this is the form in which, as we have just seen, it is presented in the creeds of the Reformers, and the works of the "best divines."

It will be at once perceived that all such questions as the following, proceed on an incorrect apprehension of the point at issue. It is often asked, if Adam's first sin is propagated to us, why not all his other sins, and the sins of all our ancestors? No one properly maintains that Adam's *first* sin, his act of eating the forbidden fruit, is propagated to any one. This is a sheer impossibility. We derive from Adam a nature destitute of any native tendency to the love and service of God; and since the soul, from its nature, is filled as it were with susceptibilities, dispositions, or tendencies to certain modes of acting, or to objects out of itself, if destitute of the governing tendency or disposition to holiness and God, it has, of course, a tendency to self-gratification and sin. There is surely nothing incredible or inconceivable in the existence of a native tendency to delight in God, any more than in the existence of a tendency or disposition to delight in beauty, or social intercourse, or in our own offspring. Men have still an innate sense of right and wrong, a natural sense of justice, etc. Why then may not Adam have been created with an analogous tendency to delight in God? And if this disposition presupposes a state of friendship with his Maker, or if it is the result of special Divine influence, why may not that influence be withheld as the expression of God's displeasure for the apostasy and rebellion of man? This is perfectly analogous to the dealings of God in his providence, and agreeable to the declarations of his word. He abandons sinners to themselves as a punishment of their transgressions; he withholds or withdraws blessings from children, in punishment, or as an expression of his displeasure, for the sins of their parents. There is, therefore, nothing in this doctrine at variance with the Divine character or conduct. On the contrary, it has in its support the whole tenor of his dealings with our race, from the beginning of the world. The objections, therefore, founded on the supposed absurdity of the propagation of sin, and especially of Adam's *first sin*, all rest on misapprehension of the doctrine in dispute.

Nor is the objection any better supported, that the doctrine of corruption of nature makes God, from whom that nature proceeds, the author of sin. Our nature is not corrupted by any positive act of God, or by the infusion, implanting, or inworking of any habit or principle of sin; God merely withholds judicially those influences which produced in Adam a tendency or disposition to holiness; precisely as a monarch often, from the purest and wisest motives, withholds favors from the children of traitors or rebels, or bestows them upon the children of patriots and public benefactors. There is in every human being a tendency to act upon the same principle. We are all disposed to regard with less favor the children of the wicked than the children of the good. If this principle is recognized even in the ordinary dealings of Divine Providence, we need not wonder at its being acted upon in that great transaction which decided the fate of the world, as Adam was not on trial for himself alone, but also for his posterity.

As little weight is due to the objection, that the law of propagation does not secure the transmission of bodily defects, or mental and moral peculiarities of parents to their children. This objection supposes that the derivation of a corrupt nature from Adam is resolved into this general law; whereas it is uniformly represented as a peculiar case, founded on the representative character of Adam, and not to be accounted for by this general law exclusively. It is constantly represented as resulting from the judicial withholding of the influences of the Holy Spirit from an apostate race. See the Confessions of the Reformers quoted above: *Defectus et concupiscentia sunt poenae, Apologia* 1, p. 58. That the peculiarities, and especially that the piety of parents, are not transmitted by the law of propagation, from parents to children, does not therefore present a shadow of an objection to the common doctrine on this subject. The notorious fact, however, that the mental and moral peculiarities of parents are transmitted to their children, frequently and manifestly, though not with the uniformity of an established law, answers two important purposes. It shows that there is nothing absurd, or out of analogy with God's dealing with men, in the doctrine of hereditary depravity; and also, that the doctrine is consistent with God's goodness and justice. For if, under the administration of the divine Being, analogous facts are daily occurring, it

must be right and consistent with the perfections of God.

The most common and plausible objection to this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with the nature of sin and holiness to suppose that either one or the other can be innate, or that a disposition or principle, which is not the result of choice, can possess a moral character. To this objection, President Edwards answers, "In the first place, I think it a contradiction to the nature of things, as judged of by the common-sense of mankind. It is agreeable to the sense of the minds of men in all ages, not only that the fruit or effect of a good choice is virtuous, but the good choice itself, from which that effect proceeds; yea, and not only so, but the antecedent good disposition, temper, or affection of mind, from whence proceeds that good choice, is virtuous. This is the general notion, not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; and so that the act of choosing that which is good is no farther virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle or virtuous disposition of mind, which supposes that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice; and that, therefore, it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition. If the choice be first, before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what signifies that choice? There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love, ambition, or some animal appetite." *Original Sin*, p. 140. It is certainly according to the intuitive judgment of men, that innate dispositions are amiable or unamiable, moral or immoral, according to their nature; and that their character does not depend on the mode of their production. The parental instinct, pity, sympathy with the happiness and sorrows of others, though founded in innate principles of our nature, are universally regarded as amiable attributes of the soul; and the opposite dispositions as the reverse. In like manner, the sense of justice, hatred of cruelty and oppression, though natural, are moral from their very nature. And the universal disposition to prefer ourselves to others, though the strongest of all the native tendencies of the mind, is no less universally recognized as evil.

The opposite opinion, which denies the possibility of moral dispositions prior to acts of choice, is irreconcilable with the nature of virtue, and involves us in all the difficulties of the doctrine, that *indifference* is necessary to the freedom of the will and the morality of actions. If Adam was created neither holy nor unholy, if it is not true that "God made man upright," but that he formed his own moral character, how is his choice of God as the portion of his soul to be accounted for? Or what moral character could it have? To say that the choice was made from the desire of happiness, or the impulse of self-love, affords no solution of the case; because it does not account for the nature of the choice. It assigns no reason why God, in preference to any other object, was chosen. This desire could only prompt to a choice, but could not determine the object. If it be said that the choice was determined by the superior excellence of God as a source of happiness, this supposes that this excellence was, in the view of the mind, an object supremely desirable; but the desire of moral excellence is, from the nature of the case, a moral or virtuous desire; and if this determined the choice, moral character existed prior to this determination of the will, and neither consisted in it, nor resulted from it. On the other hand, if the choice was determined by no desire of the object as a moral good, it could have no moral character. How is it possible that the choice of an object which is made from no regard for its excellence, should have any moral character? The choice, considered as an act of the mind, derives its character entirely from the motive by which it is determined. If the motive be desire for it as morally excellent, the choice is morally good, and is the evidence of an antecedent virtuous disposition of mind; but if the motive be mere self-love, the choice is neither good nor bad. There is no way, on the theory in question, of accounting for this preference for God, but by assuming the self-determining power of the will and supposing that the selection of one object, rather than another, is made prior to the rise of the desire for it as excellent, and consequently in a state of indifference.

This reasoning, though it applies to the origin of holiness, is not applicable to the origin of sin; and, therefore, the objection that it supposes a sinful disposition to exist in Adam, prior to his first transgression, is not valid. Because an act of disobedience performed under the impulse of self-love, or of some animal appetite, is sinful, it does not follow that an act of obedience, performed under a similar impulse, and without any regard for God or moral excellence, is virtuous.

Of all the facts ascertained by the history of the world, it would seem to be among the plainest, that men

are born destitute of a disposition to seek their chief good in God, and with a disposition to make self-gratification the great end of their being. Even reason, conscience, and natural affection, are less universal characteristics of our fallen race. For there are idiots and moral monsters often to be met with; but for a child of Adam, uninfluenced by the special grace of God, to delight in his Maker, as the portion of his soul, from the first dawn of his moral being, is absolutely without example among all the thousands of millions of men who have inhabited our world. If experience can establish anything, it establishes the truth of the scriptural declaration, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." It would seem no less plain, that this cannot be the original and *normal* state of man; that human nature is not now what it was when it proceeded from the hand of God. Every thing else which God has made, answers the end of its being; but human nature, since the fall, has uniformly worked badly: in no one instance has it spontaneously turned to God as its chief good. It cannot be believed that God thus made man; that there has been no perversion of his faculties; no loss of some original and guiding disposition or tendency of his mind. It cannot be credited that men are now what Adam was, when he first opened his eyes on the wonders of creation and the glories of God. Reason, Scripture, and experience, therefore, all concur in support of the common doctrine of the Christian world, that the race fell in Adam, lost their original rectitude, and became prone to evil as the sparks fly upward.

This doctrine has so strong a witness in the religious experience of Christians, that it is not wonderful that it has been almost universally received. Individual opponents and objectors have indeed appeared, from time to time; but it is believed that no organized sect, bearing the Christian name, the Socinians excepted, have ever discarded it from the articles of their faith. It is so intimately connected with the doctrines of divine influence and redemption, that they have almost uniformly been held or rejected together. It has indeed often been said, because the term *original sin* was first used by Augustine, that the doctrine itself took its origin with him; although perfectly synonymous expressions occur so constantly in the writings of the earlier Fathers. Equally destitute of foundation is the assertion, so often made, that Augustine was driven to his views on this subject by his controversy with Pelagius. He had arrived at all the conclusions on which he ultimately rested, at least ten years before any controversy on the subject<sup>27</sup>. He was led to these results by the study of the scriptures, and by his own personal experience. His earlier views on the intimately related doctrines of depravity, ability, dependence, and grace, were all modified as he became more thoroughly acquainted with the word of God, and with his own heart. When he passed what Neander calls the crisis of his religious history, he saw clearly the depth of the evil which existed within him, and had corresponding views of the necessity and efficacy of the grace of God, by which alone this evil could be removed. With regard to Pelagius, the case was just the reverse. His views of depravity being superficial, he had very high ideas of the ability of man, and very low conceptions of the operations of the Spirit of God. The latter, as the author just referred to strikingly remarks, was the representative and champion of "the general, moral, and religious consciousness of men;" the other, of "the peculiar nature of Christian consciousness." A doctrine which enters so much into the experience of all Christians, and which has maintained its ground in all ages and sections of the Church, must have its deep foundations in the testimony of God, and the consciousness of men.

III. It is included in the doctrines already stated, that mankind have had a fair probation in Adam, their head and representative; and that we are not to consider God as placing them on their probation, in the very first dawn of their intellectual and moral existence, and under circumstances (or "a divine constitution") which secure the certainty of their sinning. Such a probation could hardly deserve the name.

IV. It is also included in the doctrine of this portion of Scripture, that mankind is an unit, in the sense in which an army, in distinction from a mob, is one; or as a nation, a community, or a family, is one, in opposition to a mere fortuitous collection of individuals. Hence the frequent and extensive transfer of the responsibility and consequences of the acts of the heads of these communities to their several members, and from one member to others. This is a law which pervades the whole moral government and providential dispensations of God. We are not like the separate grains of wheat in a measure, but links in a complicated chain. All influence the destiny of each, and each influences the destiny of all. V. The design of the apostle being to illustrate the nature and to confirm the certainty of our justification, it is the leading doctrine of this passage, that our acceptance with God is founded neither on our faith nor our good works, but on the obedience or righteousness of Christ, which to us is a free gift. This is the

fundamental doctrine of the gospel, verses 18, 19.

VI. The dreadful evil of sin is best seen in the fall of Adam, and in the cross of Christ. By the one offense of one man, what a waste of ruin has been spread over the whole world! How far beyond conception the misery that one act occasioned! There was no adequate remedy for this evil but the death of the Son of God, verses 12, 15, 16, etc.

VII. It is the prerogative of God to bring good out of evil, and to make the good triumph over the evil. From the fall has sprung redemption, and from redemption results which eternity alone can disclose, verses 20, 21.

### REMARKS

1. Every man should bow down before God, under the humiliating consciousness that he is a member of an apostate race; the son of a rebellious parent; born estranged from God, and exposed to his displeasure, verses 12, 15, 16, etc.

2. Every man should thankfully embrace the means provided for his restoration to the Divine favor, viz., "the abundance of grace and gift of righteousness," ver. 17.

3. Those that perish, perish not because the sin of Adam has brought them under condemnation; nor because no adequate provision has been made for their recovery; but because they will not receive the offered mercy, ver. 17.

4. For those who refuse the proffered righteousness of Christ, and insist on trusting to their own righteousness, the evil of sin and God's determination to punish it, show there can be no reasonable hope; while, for those who humbly receive this gift, there can be no rational ground of fear, ver. 15.

5. If, without personal participation in the sin of Adam, all men are subject to death, may we not hope that, without personal acceptance of the righteousness of Christ, all who die in infancy are saved?

6. We should never yield to temptation on the ground that the sin to which we are solicited appears to be a trifle (merely eating a forbidden fruit), or that it is but for ONCE. Remember that ONE offense of one man. How often has a man, or a family, been ruined forever by ONE sin! ver. 12.

7. Our dependence on Jesus Christ is entire, and our obligations to him are infinite. It is through his righteousness, without the shadow of merit on our own part, that we are justified. He alone was adequate to restore the ruins of the fall. From those ruins he has built up a living temple, a habitation of God through the Spirit.

8. We must experience the operation of the law, in producing the knowledge and conviction of sin, in order to be prepared for the appreciation and reception of the work of Christ. The Church and the world were prepared, by the legal dispensation of the Old Testament, for the gracious dispensation of the New, ver. 20.

9. We should open our hearts to the large prospects of purity and blessedness presented in the gospel; the victory of grace over sin and death, which is to be consummated in the triumph of true religion, and in the eternal salvation of those multitudes out of every tribe and kindred, which no man can number, ver. 21.