



ROMANS Part 45

Chapter 5:15-19

Greater Than Adam, Part 4



But not as the offense, thus also the grace. For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds. And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just award.

For if, by the offense of the one, death reigns through the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.

Since Jesus Christ is greater than Adam, He must rescue from sin and death every single member of Adam's tribe. Since everyone belongs to Adam, then everyone will one day belong to Christ. This is Paul's message in verses 15, 16, 18, and 19 of Romans chapter 5, recorded above. What about verse 17? Verse 17 especially references those who believe now, rather than later. More on this verse in an upcoming edition.

The "much rather" and "superabounding" of Christ's rescue of humanity is not about numbers—for certainly Christ rescues every single member of Adam's race. If not, then He cannot even begin to be favorably compared to Adam. So how can a "much rather" salvation be more than rescuing every son and daughter of the first man? The "much rather" concerns itself with drastically improving the experience of the race. Why go through the millennia of trouble just to pull us from the mire and place us back where we were before this whole thing started? This question assumes that the race is placed back where it was before this whole thing started. God is not that shortsighted. This would be like rescuing someone who has somehow survived a boat accident over Niagara Falls, and then placing that person back in the boat in the deadly torrents of the Niagara River. What sort of rescue would that be? Technically, it would be a rescue, but it would merely set up the victim for the same disaster.



THE REAL DISASTER

The disaster of Eden occurred before Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The disaster predating Satan's temptation was that neither Adam nor his woman appreciated either good or evil. They were emotionally neutered. There was no happiness because there was no sadness. If you ever see any artist's rendering of Adam and Eve where either party is smiling, then it's a lie. It would have been impossible for either of them to have broken out in so much as a grin. A smile or a grin is a reaction to something good or happy, as opposed to something evil or sad. Since the first couple had no knowledge of either good or evil (they hadn't eaten from the tree yet), they couldn't have smiled. Laughter, therefore, would have been completely out of the question. Laughter is a reaction to something funny, and funny is the opposite of tragic. Nothing was tragic, so therefore nothing was funny. This situation was disastrous. The lesser disaster of eating the fruit and becoming temporarily mortal

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solved this greater disaster of an emotional void incapable of appreciating anything, including God. Thus, Adam and Eve could smile and laugh only *after* introducing sin and death into the rehabilitated Earth. How ironic is that? It's one of the first mercies of God: mirth in the face of death.

People tend to say, “Oh, how awful that Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Evil,” but these people don't realize that it was the Tree of the Knowledge of both Good and Evil. God wisely refrained from putting good and evil into different fruits, in which case He would have planted the Tree of the Knowledge of Evil *here*, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good over *there*. What idiot would ever purposely eat from the Tree of Evil only? It's only the presence of good that could make its opposing force—evil—attractive. God purposely made good and evil a package deal.

To enjoy one, we must imbibe of the other. Today, we call it “contrast.” Before mortality entered our veins, there was no such thing as emotional contrast. The day the forbidden fruit was consumed was the first day of the ongoing yet temporary human experience of knowing a thing by means of its opposite.

Laughter/tears; joy/sadness; life/death—it all comes from a single bite of a single fruit. Do you want good? Then you’ve got to taste evil. Do you want to laugh? Then make way for tragedy—for now. It won’t always be this way.

THE SET-UP

God wants happy, jolly, thankful, laughing worshippers, not emotionally neutered nothings. This is why He introduced evil into the lives of Adam and Eve, via the fruit of that tree. In the absolute viewpoint, God caused Adam and Eve to eat. Looking at it relatively, He used intermediary causes to force their hand: the beauty of the tree, the availability of it, the desirability of the fruit, the inescapable lure of prohibition (see Romans 7:8), the innocence of the woman, and the cunning of the serpent. Isn’t God responsible for all these things? We can only



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conclude, then, that He wanted Adam and Eve to eat, and at the same time to imagine that they were doing so of their own accord. They needed to feel what it was like to lose His fellowship and wallow in the new and sick sensation known as “regret.” How mean of God? No. The only way the first couple could ever appreciate His fellowship was to lose it. Ever hear the saying, “You don’t know what you’ve got until you lose it?” God invented that saying. Humans have merely passed it on. It started in Eden.

If evil were eternal, then its entry into the universe via God’s hand—Isaiah 45:7—would be inexcusable. But evil is not eternal, it’s temporary. The eternality of evil is the worst teaching imaginable. It’s a nightmare that has been written, produced, directed, and staged by Christianity using poor translations of the Bible as a script. Paul tells

us in 1 Corinthians 15:26 that, “The last enemy is being abolished, death.” I’ll believe Paul and reject the Christian fright show. If death is the last enemy abolished, then every other enemy—every other evil—will have gone before. This is pure logic. God created evil to do its nasty but necessary work of revealing all things good. When all things good are finally and fully bloomed, God dismantles forever the scaffolding—evil—used to produce them. 1 Corinthians 15:26 proves it. Christianity knows nothing of this joy. They love evil too much. The prospect of evil being forever abolished makes them sad. They want their enemies to be eternally tormented. They want to watch.

GOD’S USE OF EVIL

God’s use of evil can be likened to a human using fire to purify gold. When the gold is purified, the fire is abolished. Is a gold watch still on fire? A ring? A doubloon? King Tut’s coffin? The lampstand of the tabernacle? World class dancers train with bars, weights, and repetitive exercises. When the dancers finally take the stage, none of that stuff follows them. The only things taking the stage then are beauty and grace. The ugly stuff produced the skill, but then got put away. The skill remains; the means to the skill disappear.

Same with childhood. Paul says, “When I have become a man, I have discarded that which is a child’s” (1 Corinthians 13:11). Childhood must precede manhood; there can be no manhood without it. But then when manhood comes, the things of childhood are discarded. The childhood is discarded; the manhood remains.

Same with the law. Paul writes in Galatians 3:23—

Now before the coming of faith we were garrisoned under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed. So that the law has become our escort to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. Now, at the coming of faith, we are no longer under an escort, for you are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus.

Paul is obviously speaking here to the Jews who were once under law. But even for the nations, law was a tutor in the sense of visible proof via the practical experience of another people (Israel) that flesh and blood is not able to please God (Romans 8:8). The law contrasted the coming of faith. Once the faith comes for those Jews once under law, they’re no longer under law. For them,



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law disappears. Law brought them to where they could appreciate faith. After that, it was worse than useless to them.

Romans 11:32 follows a similar principle: “God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all.” The stubbornness is a prerequisite to the mercy. Only those who are stubborn can appreciate being unlocked from it. When God finally shows the mercy, does He keep twirling the lock of stubbornness around His finger? Absolutely not. He discards it. It did its job, and now it goes away, never to return.

Same with the cross of Christ—the literal cross. The cross was an evil, but see what good came from it in the form of such love that can appear only against a background of hate and ridiculous torture. God then raises Jesus from the dead, and everyone is remarkably happy. But Jesus could not have been raised from the dead apart from first being dead. Being dead required stuff: spices; shroud; face-wrap; tomb; a complete lack of life. Now that Jesus Christ is alive, the death stuff disappears. Do you think Jesus carries around His face wrap?

AULD ACQUAINTANCE FORGOTTEN

We couldn’t know God’s radical love apart from the radical torture Jesus experienced for our sakes on

the cross. God kills His Son, then raises Him, but He doesn’t bring along to the victory party the actual cross, or the stone from the tomb. He boxes up the tools. We still see the wounds on Jesus, yes, but not the damned cross that produced them. Nobody knows where the original cross is, and God doesn’t want anyone finding it. No one ever will find it. It’s disintegrated, returned to dust. The whip that the Romans used to beat Him is gone. If people think that they have found the tomb of Jesus, more power to them. I doubt it’s the right location. God wants that terrible rock in the past. The tomb was necessary to the resurrection, but now that we have resurrection, we can walk away from the tomb and never return. Who ever visits the graves of loved ones? Lots of people, I guess. Not me. I’ll remember my loved ones how they were, then see them how they will be. To heck with the in-between. God abolishes death and all tombs, especially the tomb of Jesus Christ. There is no more torture, but only the love born through and out of the endurance of that torture.

Death is the necessary prerequisite to everyone having life, and evil the necessary prerequisite to the same everyone enjoying good. Once the life and the good are won for all, the necessary but now expendable negatives are abolished. It’s 1 Corinthians 15:26 again. I love that verse.

God brings out the good, destroys the evil that bore it, leaves the good intact, then seals the deal with immortality. God would never have “sealed with immortality” the terrible state of never appreciating God. This is why He prevented Adam and Eve from eating of the Tree of Life in their then-unrealized deplorable condition of not appreciating anything. Who wants to live forever in that state? Neither were they allowed to eat from the Tree of Life after sin. Who wants to live forever in a state of screwing up all the time? No, God will not seal anything with immortality until there is something worth sealing. When we are all finally made into the image of His Son, then He will seal us with the blessed state of never dying again. From then on, nothing will be able to remove good from our being.

This is an ingenious arrangement. It turns out that God knows what He is doing. What a relief. —MZ