

1984

Seventh-day Adventists and Original Sin: a Study of the Early Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Understanding of the Effect of Adam's Sin on His Posterity

Edwin Harry Zackrison
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Andrews University

PH.D. 1984

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A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
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by
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January 1984

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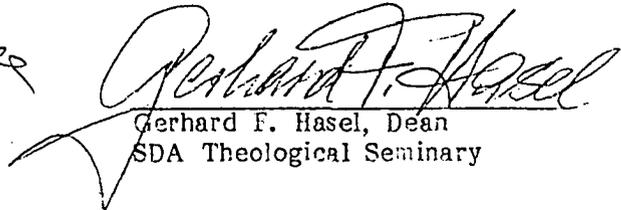
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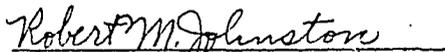
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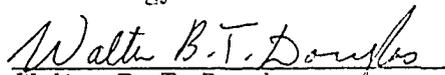
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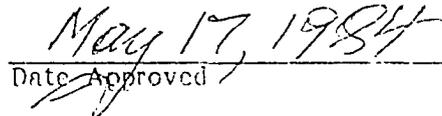
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ABSTRACT

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Edwin Harry Zackrison

Chairman: Hans K. LaRondelle

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

TITLE: SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND ORIGINAL SIN: A STUDY OF THE
EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
UNDERSTANDING OF THE EFFECT OF ADAM'S SIN
ON HIS POSTERITY

Name of Researcher: Edwin Harry Zackrison

Name and degree of faculty advisor: Hans K. LaRondelle, Th.D.

Date Completed: January 1984

Problem

In Seventh-day Adventist theology, the doctrine of original sin has received ambivalent treatment. Periodically voices within the church and outside of it have asserted that the doctrine has no part in SDA theology, yet other Christians have insisted that it is a Scriptural doctrine. It was the purpose of the present study to examine the theological roots of Adventism to determine the reasons for and the content of its treatment of the doctrine.

Method

Since Biblical and historical perspectives are indispensable to the critical process of theology, a brief developmental survey was done to reveal

trends and models relevant to Adventism. In addition, the SDA expression from 1850 to 1900 was examined through church-issued publications. Norman Powell Williams' instrument for analyzing a doctrine of original sin was then applied to the SDA theological presentations.

Results

There is a discernible line of development from the English Enlightenment to the Adventist Movement. Through conditionalist views Adventism acquired a hamartiology similar to that of the nineteenth century New Haven theologians. According to this view man's inherited condition is not his responsibility and is not to be properly called sin.

Early Adventist concerns were anthropological, but these were superseded by a greater soteriological emphasis in the 1890s.

Conclusions

The SDA treatment of original sin was developed along Arminian and conditionalist lines and emphasized actual sin more than ontological sin (as Augustine and certain Reformers had).

While SDAs were located geographically, historically, and theologically, in an anti-Catholic, anti-Calvinistic tradition, they initially used the term "original sin," though in their own way. However, by the end of the nineteenth century they had virtually dispensed with all employment of the term as useful to convey their understanding of man's fallenness. This undoubtedly contributes to Adventist hesitancy toward usage of the term which persists to the present. Nevertheless, SDAs expressed a doctrine that is definable as a doctrine of original sin by theological and historical models.

For Jolene,
Jill, and Mark

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
Beveridge	<u>Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion</u> , trans., Henry Beveridge
<u>BC</u>	<u>Book of Concord</u>
C	Anselm of Canterbury. <u>The Virgin Conception and Original Sin</u> , trans., Joseph M. Colleran
D	Denzinger, <u>Sources of Catholic Dogma</u>
<u>DCC</u>	<u>Documents of the Christian Church</u> , ed., Henry Bettenson
<u>ECF</u>	<u>Early Christian Fathers</u> , ed., Henry Bettenson
EGW	Ellen G. White
<u>FC</u>	<u>Fathers of the Church Series</u>
<u>LCC</u>	<u>Library of Christian Classics</u> , eds., John Baillie, John T. McNeill, Henry P. Van Dusen
<u>LCF</u>	<u>Later Christian Fathers</u> , ed., Henry Bettenson
Leith	<u>Creeds of the Church</u> , ed. and rev., John H. Leith
<u>LW</u>	<u>Luther's Works</u>
M	<u>Calvin's Commentaries on Romans</u> , trans., Ross Mackenzie
NB	<u>The Writings of James Arminius</u> , trans., James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers

<u>RH</u>	<u>Review and Herald</u> ¹
Ryan	<u>Confessions of St. Augustine</u> , trans., John K. Ryan
Schaff	<u>The Creeds of Christendom</u> , ed., Philip Schaff
<u>SDA Ency.</u>	<u>Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia</u>
<u>ST</u>	<u>Signs of the Times</u>
<u>STA</u>	<u>Signs of the Times (Australasian)</u>
<u>SW</u>	<u>Selected Writings of Martin Luther</u> , ed., Theodore G. Tappert
<u>WL</u>	<u>Works of Martin Luther</u>
<u>YI</u>	<u>Youth's Instructor</u>

¹This periodical went through several changes in nomenclature. At its inception in 1850 the name was Second Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald; in 1851 the name changed to The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald; in 1861 to Review and Herald; in 1971 it went back to the old name Advent Review and Sabbath Herald; and finally in 1978 it assumed its current name, Adventist Review. Perhaps the name most widely used to identify the magazine in the United States is Review and Herald.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND RELEVANCE

In Christian thought, "original sin" is the theological designation for the state or condition of universal sinfulness in which mankind is found as the result of Adam's sin.¹ It stands distinct from "actual sin," or that voluntary, conscious transgression of the law of God. The doctrine of original sin purports to provide a systematic, theological explanation of the Biblical data regarding radical sinfulness, an approach roughly parallel that taken in developing the doctrine of the Trinity.²

¹Anselm of Canterbury (c. 1033-1109) defined original sin as such: "I cannot understand this sin I am calling 'original' to be anything else than that same deprivation of the required justice . . . by which all are children of wrath." The Virgin Conception and Original Sin 27 (C, 208). In his Apology of the Augsburg Confession 2.15 (BC, 102), Melancthon translated Anselm's definition: "Original sin is the lack of original righteousness." While open to interpretation, the definition as it stands represents the traditional Christian understanding. John Hick suggests: "It is helpful to distinguish two separable elements . . . namely, the assertion of an inherited sinfulness or tendency to sin, and the assertion of a universal human guilt in respect of Adam's crime, falling upon us on account of a physical or mystical presence of the whole race in its first forefather. . . . The former idea is common to all Christian traditions—whether in the form of a psychologically or of a socially transmitted moral distortion—whilst the latter idea is peculiar to Augustinian and Calvinist theology." Evil and the God of Love (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1952), p. 201. See Paul King Jewett, "Original Sin and the Fall of Man," Southwestern Journal of Theology 19 (Fall 1976):18-30, for the same distinction.

²Hick asserts that "the Augustinian picture is so familiar that it is commonly thought of as the Christian view of man and his sinful plight. Nevertheless it is only a Christian view." Evil and the God of Love, p. 201. It is crucial that this point be maintained so that the breadth of the term will be comprehended. There are several theories regarding how Adam's sin is to be considered connected to the condition of his posterity. For this investigation "original sin" will be used to designate the notion of man's sinful state or condition, and the "doctrine of original sin" will serve to indicate theological attempts to organize the Biblical data. Therefore, the

Problem

In Seventh-day Adventist theology the specific topic of original sin has received ambivalent response, a fact that has become more apparent in recent church discussions and debates over the nature of Christ and righteousness by faith. SDA theologian Richard Rice has observed that "recent interest in the nature of human sin [among Adventists] . . . arises out of a primary concern for the question of perfection, rather than from a basic interest in understanding human nature."¹ Geoffrey Paxton, an Anglican observer of Adventism, recently asserted that in the church's history the doctrine has been "conspicuous by its absence," and he labeled modern interest in the subject as a "soteriological gain of the 1960s."²

Those church theologians arguing for an SDA doctrine of original sin insist that without it the church cannot achieve either a consistent holistic theology in general or coherent soteriology, Christology, and anthropology in particular.³ Other SDAs vigorously discount the value of

designation "original sin" will not be restricted to the theories of imputed guilt or inherited guilt, nor will it refer exclusively to any one historical position.

¹Richard Rice, "Dominant Themes in Adventist Theology," Spectrum 10:4 (March 1980):62.

²Geoffrey Paxton, The Shaking of Adventism (Wilmington: Zenith Publishers, 1977), pp. 98, 105, 107.

³These writers do not necessarily understand original sin to mean inherited guilt in the Augustinian sense. They do not often use the designation "original sin" to describe their position but their presentations on the nature of Christ demonstrate a clear doctrine of such. See for examples: Roy Allan Anderson, The God-Man His Nature and Work (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1970), pp. 32-57; Norman R. Gulley, Christ Our Substitute (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1982), pp. 40-55; Edward Heppenstall, The Man Who Is God (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1977), pp. 107-150; Edwin Reiner, The Atonement (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1971), pp. 132-138; Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: An Explanation of Certain Major Aspects of Seventh-day Adventist Belief (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1957), pp. 50-65; Roy Allan Anderson, "Human, Not Carnal," Ministry 29 (September 1956):12-15; R. H. Blodgett,

traditional formulations and argue that the doctrine of original sin has no place in historical Adventism. They agree with the late SDA theologian M. L. Andreasen who wrote, "as Adventists, . . . we do not believe in original sin."¹

W. G. C. Murdoch, a professor of systematic theology at the SDA Theological Seminary for nearly three decades, writes:

I first of all began to teach this doctrine in 1924 at Newbold [College in England], then in Avondale, Australia, and 26 years here in the seminary. My concept of the subject has broadened, but has not changed materially. . . . Original sin was committed by our first parents, and has been passed on to every one of their

"Was Christ Truly Human?" Ministry 37 (September 1964):7-10; Wadie Farag, "The Nature and Person of Christ," Ministry 35 (September 1962):7-11; Desmond Ford, "Did Christ Have Sinful Thoughts," STA 84 (March 1, 1969):30; Edward Heppenstall, "Salvation Unlimited," Ministry 48 (September 1975):15-18; G. D. Keough, "The Sinlessness of the Sin Bearer," Ministry 36 (October 1963):17-18, 46; A. V. Olson, "The Incarnation and Nature of Christ," Ministry 35 (January 1962):18-21; Robert W. Olson, "Outline Studies on Christian Perfection and Original Sin," supplement to Ministry magazine (May 1970):27-30; Edwin Reiner, "Four Mysteries of the Christian Faith," Ministry 38 (March 1965):45-47; Carl Coffman, "The Humanity of Christ," study paper, Pacific Union College, n.d. (Mimeographed.); Desmond Ford, "The Relationship Between the Incarnation and Righteousness by Faith," paper presented at the Palmdale conference on righteousness by faith, Palmdale, California, April 23-30, 1976, pp. 25-41, G. C. Archives. (Mimeographed.); Gillian Ford, "The Soteriological Implications of the Human Nature of Christ," thought paper, 1975, Heritage Room, Andrews University. (Mimeographed.); Hans K. LaRondelle, "Righteousness by Faith," lecture notes, Andrews University Theological Seminary, 1966, pp. 56-57, Heritage Room, Andrews University. (Mimeographed.)

¹Those who hold this position understand original sin to mean inherited guilt in the Augustinian sense. See for examples: M. L. Andreasen, Letters to the Churches, Series A, No. 5 (Baker, Oregon: Hudson Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 14; Thomas A. Davis, Was Jesus Really Like Us? (Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1979), pp. 45-83; Herbert E. Douglass and Leo Van Dolson, Jesus—The Benchmark of Humanity (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1977), pp. 25-40; Herbert E. Douglass, et. al., Perfection (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1975), pp. 9-56; A. Leroy Moore, The Theology Crisis (Corpus Christi: Life Seminars, 1980), pp. 98-125; R. F. Cottrell, "What About 'Original sin'?" RH 154:16 (April 21, 1977):4-5; Herbert E. Douglass, "Concepts of Jesus Affect Personality," RH 149:35 (August 31, 1972):12; Bruno Steinweg, "Perfection," Ministry 44 (August 1971):69; Eugene F. Durand, letter written on behalf of Kenneth H. Wood, editor of the Adventist Review, to Austen G. Fletcher, minister in Australasia, March 1, 1977. Personal files.

descendants. . . . Adventists have always taught this, as it is implicit in our teaching of the New Birth.¹

On the other hand, Ralph Larson, currently a professor of theology at the church's Far Eastern Seminary in Manila, has authored and privately distributed several papers and sermons in which he maintains that

our faith is now being strongly challenged by those who want to add a doctrine of original sin and a doctrine that man cannot, either in his own strength or in the power of Christ, keep the ten commandments, to Seventh-day Adventist theology.²

In the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia the position of the church is stated thus:

In traditional Christian theology "original sin" is the personal moral guilt for Adam's transgression presumably inherited by every man. SDAs do not stress the idea that personal, individual moral guilt adheres to Adam's descendants because of his sin. They stress, instead, that his sin resulted in the condition of estrangement from God in which every human being is born. This estrangement involves an inherent tendency to commit sin. In a state of sin a man's life is self-centered; however, conversion reorients the life and centers it in Christ.³

This ambivalence is to be found on an even more fundamental level than a cross section of opinions from practicing Adventists. It is also demonstrated in the church's most recent statement of Fundamental Beliefs (1980) entitled, "The Nature of Man" [Article 7]:

Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each in an indivisible unity of body, mind

¹W. G. C. Murdoch, personal letter, July 26, 1979.

²Ralph Larson, "The Fraud of the Unfallen Nature," sermon preached at the Loma Linda Hill Church, n.d., p. 4. Personal files. (Mimeographed.) Cf. by the same author, other sermons: "Should Augustine's Doctrine of Original Sin Be Added to Seventh-day Adventist Theology?" n.d. Personal files. (Mimeographed.); "Original Sin: A Consideration of the Recent Theological Emphases of Dr. Edward G. Heppenstall," n.d. Personal files. (Mimeographed.); "Who Needs Original Sin?" April 22, 1978. Personal files. (Mimeographed.)

³SDA Ency., 1966 ed., s.v. "Sin." Curiously, the same work has presented two opinions on the question of sinful propensities in its two

and soul, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else. When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position under God. The image of God in them was marred and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another, and to care for their environment¹.

Rather than follow the lead of some evangelical communions that have shown no reticence to explain precisely what they mean by the effect of Adam's sin on his posterity, Adventism has chosen, even in its latest confession, to avoid the terminology of the doctrine of original sin and to allow for some variety of interpretation of the effects of Adam's sin. For example, if one assumes that the church is declaring "the image of God" to be the freedom of the will (as the prescribed parameters of the qualifying statement would imply) then one appears safe in concluding that for Adam and Eve to fall from "their high position" means that they lost their freedom of will. However, it is not clear whether this is to be understood as "bondage of the will," radical or total depravity, or simple weakness.

Again, is the "fallen nature" to be understood anthropologically? or soteriologically? In relation to the sentence immediately preceding the phrase (the "marring" of the image of God is man's becoming "subject to death") it could appear to be a predominantly anthropological assertion. Thus one would understand: Adam sinned, man dies. But if one reads the phrase in the light of the statement following it (to be "born with . . . tendencies to sin") it would appear to be a soteriological and hamartiological

editions. See Ibid., s.v. "Doctrine of Man": "SDAs believe that man inherited a sinful nature without a propensity to sin." In Ibid., 1976 ed., s.v. "Doctrine of Man": "SDAs believe that man inherited a sinful nature with a propensity to sin." Emphasis supplied.

¹RH 157:24 (May 1, 1980):23. Emphasis supplied.

assertion. Thus one would be faced with another set of questions: Does a person become a sinner when he sins? Does he sin because he is fallen? Is he fallen only when he sins? Or is he fallen because he dies, or has a proclivity and capability to die? Furthermore, the Reformation concern regarding tendencies to sin as properly called sin is left open to interpretation.

This present interrogation is not intended to be polemical. It is rather to underscore the objective of this investigation to discover historical, theological, and hermeneutical factors that influenced this carefully formulated credal confession. What does the church say about original sin and why? What historical trends may have influenced Adventism to take this typically hesitant stance which has characterized its discussions of the topic? This study purports to answer these questions. The hypothesis is set forth here that the historical milieu in which Adventism was born gives clues to its ambivalence on this question.

In the light of these considerations, this investigation examines the formative years of Adventist thought to discover the pioneer view on original sin and its standard correlatives such as death, depravity, new birth, etc. The present writer presupposes the progressive nature of truth in the sense of man's perception and expression, and assumes that Adventism has been unable to avoid altogether coming under the influence of the religious trends of her time. It is also assumed here that this is indeed how God works—that he takes men and women where they are and molds them, bringing them ever closer to a fuller understanding of his truth. Therefore, it is considered important, even necessary, to trace the development of the doctrine itself from apostolic times, not exhaustively, but briefly, to understand major traditions that may have coalesced in nineteenth-century Adventism.

For the following reasons the historical scope of the SDA treatment has been delimited to the period from 1850-1900.

1. The formative years set the basic Adventist definitions by which later expressions must be understood, i.e., there is an unbroken line of gradual and broadening expression within the limits of the pioneers' understanding.

2. It is not the intent to present here an entire history of the doctrine in Adventism but rather to understand certain connecting links and historical roots in Christian tradition which tended to stabilize Adventist definitions.

3. From the standpoint of the formative thought years, this period is indispensable to an understanding of the progressive development of the church's theology.

4. From the perspective of righteousness by faith, it has been suggested that this period in Adventism precipitated the new emphasis at Minneapolis in 1888.¹ This investigation seeks to gain insight to that claim in terms of the role of the definition of sin held by the church at that time.

The Relevance of This Study

1. A concern for holistic theology that is in harmony with the Biblical data provides the major relevance for this topic. From the beginning

¹A. V. Olson has suggested that it was an overemphasis on the law rather than an incorrect view of the law that earned SDAs the reputation of legalists during this period. A. V. Olson, Through Crisis to Victory 1888-1901 (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1966), pp. 9-32. Ellen White wrote of this period, "As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God." "Christ Prayed for Unity Among His People," RH 67:10 (March 11, 1890):146. Norval Pease referred to this period as one of indifference toward righteousness by faith. By Faith Alone (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1962), pp. 127ff. In this setting the messages at the Minneapolis Conference aimed at correcting the overemphasis.

Adventism demonstrated this concern by insisting on the organic nature of truth. Francis Gould wrote:

Truth is a unit; it harmonizes in every part; it has several branches; and when by an eye of faith we trace those branches to their respective ends, we have found a unit or one. Like the merchant who sought for goodly pearls, we have found the pearl of great price. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. . . . It is truly wonderful to see what harmony they maintain.¹

Yet having said this, Adventists have also recognized that different ages require different emphases. Gould also made this distinction: "present truth is that portion of truth which is applicable only to those to whom it is addressed."² Because of this understanding, SDAs have often worked more toward constructing corrective than systematic theology.³

Corrective theology implies a methodology that is not so apt to articulate all areas of the major loci in as systematic or equalized a fashion as the wholistic approach. The Adventist procedure of corrective theology has been characterized by the technical term Present Truth. To understand this is crucial for a sound grasp of the Adventist theological task. Present Truth does not intrinsically rule out wholism in theology but rather attempts to complement it.⁴

¹"Present Truth," RH 44:11 (September 1, 1874):82.

²Ibid.

³William G. Johnsson has observed that the SDA concern has been "to present interlocking Bible doctrines rather than a fully worked theology." "An Evaluation of The Shaking of Adventism," Andrews University Focus 15 (Spring 1979):30.

⁴This can be seen in the pioneers' perception of the notion itself. James White, for example, saw Present Truth as truth that had been developed in the course of time, i.e., as prophecy had been fulfilled men had recognized it and the fulfillment became Present Truth. This brought with it certain "duties which are now especially incumbent upon the church." "The Head and Front of Present Truth," RH 23:3 (December 15, 1863):20. Uriah Smith further explained: "There are some truths which are important

While taking into account the issues raised by heterodoxy, wholistic theology, on the other hand, does not find its exclusive motivation in the answering of heretics or defending the church against critics. Instead, it pursues an ambitious, positive, and constructive course of its own. Guarding against overreaction it seeks to preserve the inherent tensions in sound theological positions. It aims at avoiding oversimplification and reductionism. It attempts to steer a course clear of abandoning or accepting positions and technical designations simply on the basis of their alleged association with heterodoxy. It works methodically from central theological and philosophical concepts which, ideally, guards it from inconsistency. And above all, it endeavors to be true to the meaning of the Biblical text, both linguistically and contextually.¹

in every age of the world; there are others, which are important, so to speak, only at particular periods. Some run parallel with the course of time; others are developed by the course of time. . . . Every age has had its present truth. . . . The age in which we live, reader, has also its present truth." "Synopsis of the Present Truth," RH 11:1 (November 12, 1857):4. Present Truth was not limited to prophetic understanding but was primarily dealing with present tests or duties that may be temporary in their emphasis. As M. E. Cornell wrote: "All truth is not eternal; for some truths are called into existence by circumstances. Still it must be admitted that truths do exist which remain always the same. . . . As there have been special dangers, so there was need of special warnings; for when judgments have been pending, God in mercy has ordered that a timely warning be given, and the approaching danger has been used as a new incentive to obedience." "Present Truth," RH 30:8 (August 6, 1867):113-114. See further, C. P. Bollman, "Present Truth," RH 110:36 (September 7, 1933):3; D. M. Canright, "The Present Truth," ST 3:7, 8, 9 (February 8, 15, 22, 1877):50, 59, 66-67; R. F. Cottrell, "The Truth for the Times," ST 4:18 (May 9, 1878):141; D. P. Curtis, "Present Truth," RH 65:15 (April 10, 1888):228; F. Peabody, "Present Truth," RH 57:22 (May 31, 1881):340; J. H. Waggoner, "Present Truth," RH 28:10 (August 7, 1866):76-77.

Included in this notion of Present Truth were also the Sabbath, spiritual gifts, diet, the law, etc., as they related to the present day emphasis and needed correction in those church bodies that had forgotten them.

¹For a convincing argument on the need of Adventism for a constructive theology see William G. Johnsson, "Needed—Constructive Adventist Theology," Spectrum 6 (Autumn-Winter 1974):71-77.

There is an interdependency between the doctrines of man, Christ, sin, and salvation. An example of this is illustrated in the Augsburg Confession by a condemnation of Pelagius for holding that "natural man is made righteous by his own powers, thus disparaging the sufferings and merits of Christ."¹ It is self-evident that theological assertions regarding the sinful nature of man will necessarily raise questions for Christology and have subsequent bearing on one's perception of the Lord's salvific work.

2. Responsible historical study of the doctrine of original sin in Adventist thought could be a step toward a clearer constructive approach to the topic. Historical theology has commonly been seen as a helpful, even crucial, prelude to contemporary theological work.

Polemical theology must debate the issues of legitimacy and limit; dogmatic theology must strive to formulate some a priori judgments about the development of doctrine. But it is up to historical theology to trace the processes of development.²

Such study is committed to an objectivity not unlike that of the historian.³ It endeavors to document how Christians have interpreted Scriptural data in the past and the ways in which they have grappled with the disclosure of God in Christ.⁴

For Protestants the normative value of history and tradition has never been absolute. Luther argued that "if it had not been for Holy Scripture the church, had it depended on the councils and fathers [tradition

¹Augsburg Confession 2.3 (BC, 29), emphasis supplied.

²Jaroslav Pelikan, Development of Christian Doctrine (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 39.

³Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Historical Theology: An Introduction (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978), pp. xxv-xxvii.

⁴Roland H. Bainton, Foreword to Justo L. Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, 3 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 1:11. Cf. Bengt Hägglund, History of Theology 3d ed., trans. Gene J. Lund (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), p. 7.

and history], would not have lasted long."¹ So while an appeal to history has always been crucial in that it gave evidence of faithfulness or unfaithfulness in the church's adherence to the apostolic rule, SDAs as well as other Christians need reminding that historical tradition in itself does not constitute fidelity to the Biblical data. Relative to this, Johnsson has maintained that

Theology is to be done in the confluence of three streams: Scripture, the tradition, and the culture. The Bible retains, and must retain, a normative place—it is Scripture. By tradition we understand the accumulated wisdom of the church at large, arising out of Christian experience and reflection on Scripture, a particular place being given to the peculiarly Seventh-day Adventist aspect. In this tradition then, the Ellen G. White writings and the landmark doctrines that the pioneers hammered out must be at the fore. Thus, while the Adventist cannot divest himself of his contemporaneity as he comes to the task of theology, the impingement of Scripture and the Adventist tradition temper the impact of the culture on his work.²

This dissertation examines and evaluates the underlying traditional context and pioneer views of Adventism with regard to the doctrine of original sin and thus represents a step toward future definitive and constructive work on the subject.

3. Finally, the doctrine of original sin has been considered essential by the larger Christian community throughout most of its history. Both theologians and creeds, Catholic and Protestant alike, have had some form of the doctrine. For example, the Reformers stood united in their stress on the cruciality of this doctrine. Luther held that "we are not sinners because we commit this or that sin, but we commit them because we are sinners first. . . . From a bad root only a bad tree can grow."³ Melancthon

¹On the Councils and the Church, (LW, 41:52).

²Johnsson, "Needed—Constructive Adventist Theology," p. 72.

³Lectures on Psalms, (LW, 12:348).

affirmed that "recognition of original sin is a necessity, nor can we know the magnitude of the grace of Christ unless we acknowledge our faults,"¹ and that "we cannot know his blessings unless we recognize our evil."²

Calvin emphasized man's need to know himself as sinful so he can check the natural inclinations to pride:

When viewing our miserable condition since Adam's fall, all confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and feel truly humble. . . . It is impossible to think of our primeval dignity without being immediately reminded of the sad spectacle of our ignominy and corruption, ever since we fell from our original in the person of our first parent. In this way we feel dissatisfied with ourselves, and become truly humble, while we are inflamed with new desires to seek after God, in whom each may regain those good qualities of which all are found to be utterly destitute.³

In the present century, Reinhold Niebuhr, while rejecting the traditional formulation of inherited sin (Erbstünde), held that the notion of a "universal inclination in the human heart or self [to sin] is not only meaningful but empirically verifiable."⁴ He observed further "that men are 'sinful' is one of the best attested and empirically verified facts of human existence."⁵

In short, to many Christian theologians and communities of faith, both ancient and modern, the condition of mankind commonly known as "original sin" appears empirically verifiable, and some form of the doctrine is considered to be essential for an understanding of man's need of salvation.

¹Apology of the Augsburg Confession 2.33 (BC, 104).

²Ibid., 2.50 (BC, 106).

³Institutes 2.1.1 (Beveridge, 1:210-211).

⁴Reinhold Niebuhr, "Sin," in Martin Halverson and Arthur A. Cohen, eds., A Handbook of Christian Theology (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 350.

⁵Ibid., p. 349.

This study intends to discover whether the early Adventist community shared these concerns.

In summing up the overall relevance of this task it may be helpful to introduce an analogy which, though not altogether adequate, may nevertheless give perspective. The historical development of doctrine in Adventism may be compared to that of the general Christian community. As the early church grappled with the issues of God, the nature of the Trinity, and the person of Christ, it tended to postpone deeper discussion of the questions of grace, law, and sin, until the time of Augustine, or as one may refer to it, the church's theological adolescence. In their short history Adventists have had to deal with the first three questions and now are struggling with the latter ones. One can see a sort of recapitulation of Christian thought-history in the development of Adventist ideas. Therefore, this study and evaluation should prove useful and relevant for SDA self-understanding. It should help to demonstrate whether or not Adventists have often shunned the theological term "original sin" for legitimate reasons.

Previous Scholarly Study on the Subject

SDA scholarly study in the area of original sin has not been extensive. Albert Roland Parker and Lee Herbert Fletcher each wrote Master of Arts theses on the subject at the SDA Theological Seminary.¹

Parker sought to trace the early development of the doctrine in Christian thought and to produce a brief constructive theology that would

¹Albert Roland Parker, "A Theological Study of the Effects of the Sin of Adam Upon His Posterity as Related to Sin and Guilt" (M.A. Thesis, SDA Theological Seminary, 1954); Lee Herbert Fletcher "The Seventh-day Adventist Concept of Original Sin" (M.A. Thesis, SDA Theological Seminary), 1960.

be an acceptable Adventist approach to inherited guilt.¹ He conjectured that the SDA disinterest in (or neglect of) the subject was largely due to the church's emphasis on eschatology.²

Fletcher began his thesis with a disclaimer attesting to the "inadequacies" of his study and stating his intention to provide only an introduction to the topic.³ Having said this, he proceeded to present a study broad and largely constructive in nature. While his view purports to be the SDA view it does not attempt to document what Adventists have written historically on the subject.⁴

These theses stand alone as major research contributions on the subject, but there have been a number of short papers, written by students attempting to probe certain aspects of the subject, which deserve mentioning.

In the 1960s, the present writer researched the published writings of M. L. Andreasen in an effort to trace the effect of his rejection of original sin on his position regarding the moral nature of Christ. The conclusion suggested there was a direct correlation between his two stances, and that his objections to the 1957 SDA statement on the nature of Christ [in the book Questions on Doctrine] may well have stemmed from a failure to appreciate sin as being much more than an act.⁵ In another study, Andrew Mustard, after identifying the view of John Calvin on original sin,

¹Parker, "A Theological Study of the Effects of the Sin of Adam," p. 2.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Fletcher, "Adventist Concept of Original Sin," p. iv.

⁴That is, other than EGW, whose writings are taken by Fletcher to be normative of SDA thought.

⁵Edwin Zackrison, "M. L. Andreasen's Position on the Moral Nature of Christ" (term paper, Andrews University, 1963), p. 27. Personal files. (Typewritten.)

compared a number of representative SDA writers and concluded that Adventists have generally accepted and promoted Calvin's view of original sin without question.¹ In the same decade Bruno Steinwig compiled a comprehensive collection of Ellen White's statements relative to original sin.²

In the 1970s, Haroldo J. Seidl observed that Adventist literature has been more concerned with the question of sin "on the practical level [than] on the theological level" and that the notion of transmission of guilt through original sin is "erroneous."³ Seidl cited several SDA pioneers but finally concluded that his research essentially bore out the statement found in the SDA Encyclopedia.⁴ Marius E. J. Brinkman made a very helpful collection of statements on the subject from Protestant writers and creeds, Adventist periodicals, Ellen G. White, and non-Adventist sources influential among Adventists, introducing the study with his own brief conclusions.⁵

Two recent studies by Kurt Bangert and Tim Crosby are worthy of special note because of their thoroughness and creativity. Bangert wrote a treatise attempting to identify the SDA view by using Ellen G. White as the normative source. He then concluded that "the picture of 'original sin'

¹Andrew Mustard, "A Comparison between Calvin's Doctrine of Original Sin and the Seventh-day Adventist Position Implied from Various Sources" (term paper, Andrews University, 1965), p. 14. Personal files. (Typewritten.)

²Bruno W. Steinwig, "What about Original Sin?" (research project, Andrews University, 1969). EGW Research Center, Andrews University. (Typewritten.)

³Haroldo Julio Seidl, "On Original Sin," (term paper, Andrews University, 1972), p. 5. Heritage Room, Andrews University. (Typewritten.)

⁴Ibid., p. 7. See SDA Ency., 1966 ed., s.v. "Sin." For content of this position see above, p. 4..

⁵Marius E. J. Brinkman, "Original Sin," (term paper, Andrews University, 1974). Personal files. (Typewritten.)

present here from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White appears to be in sufficient harmony with the Christian heritage so as to justify the use of the term."¹ Like Mustard, Bangert placed SDAs in the Protestant tradition in that (1) they view corruption as inevitable "through a state of separation from God;" (2) they believe one can never eradicate the sinful nature through spiritual [character] development; (3) they believe a man is born guilty and condemned; and finally, (4) they believe that Christ in His incarnation differs from present sinful man only in respect to eliminating this separation, i.e., he was born in union with the Holy Spirit.² Echoing the Reformers' concern Bangert insisted that one cannot appreciate the mercy and grace of God who does not first understand one's own exceeding sinfulness.³

In a more constructive approach Tim Crosby suggested the theory of mediate imputation as a possible answer for the Adventist dilemma on original sin. Crosby argued that this view would synthesize Biblical elements and relieve theological tensions especially with regard to the question of infants who die before the age of accountability.⁴ Concerned with maintaining sin as something for which each sinner is personally responsible, Crosby made a distinction between "death-guilt" and "hell-guilt" and on this base concluded that guilt in the former sense is what man inherits from Adam and that on the basis of personal worthiness—hence "mediate" rather than "immediate" imputation. Crosby's study leaned heavily upon the notion

¹Ibid., p. 48.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 49.

⁴Tim Crosby, "A New Approach to an Adventist Doctrine of Original Sin," term paper, Andrews University, 1977. Personal files. (Typewritten.)

of corporate solidarity and did not seriously attempt to trace SDA thought development on the subject.

Finally, A. Leroy Moore has treated the subject in the third chapter of his dissertation on Ellen G. White's concept of righteousness by faith. He submitted that while this Adventist pioneer concurred with the radical sinfulness of man she clearly denied the doctrine of original sin. Moore suggested that the doctrine is so inseparably linked with predestinarian thought that her example ought to be followed by Adventist theology.¹

It will become more apparent as the study progresses that none of these studies has attempted the particular objective or documentation required of the present investigation though they constitute some valuable groundwork and source material.²

Methodology

Certain questions were kept in mind as research on this project was progressing:

(1) Does there appear to be any effort, on the part of SDA writers, to avoid the use of certain theological designations? If there is, can any cause be detected?

¹Theology Crisis, pp. 57-125.

²In addition to the SDA contributions mentioned above there are two studies that should be mentioned here. First, that of Robert D. Brinsmead who, in 1968, wrote a 123-page syllabus on the subject in which he explained the doctrine from an alleged SDA perspective and connected it to a perfectionistic, eschatological element. He saw original sin "blotted out" in the "last generation" through the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary prior to the close of probation. See Robert D. Brinsmead, Sanctuary Institute Syllabus IV: Original Sin (Snohomish, WN: Prophetic Research International, 1968), pp. 109ff. Second, a critical study by Geoffrey J. Paxton touched on the subject although his thesis was primarily concerned with the issue of justification by faith in SDA thought. Paxton maintained that though Adventists have characteristically lacked an appreciation for the doctrine of original sin they came to teach it more clearly in the 1960s. See Shaking of Adventism, pp. 105, 115, 119, 144.

(2) If SDA writers do not use traditional theological terminology, did they use related language? For example, rather than "original sin" did they use related conceptual terms such as depravity, carnal mind, carnal nature, sinful nature, old man of sin, evil propensities, racial solidarity, Adam's sin, imputation, spiritual death, the Fall, etc.? If so, did they convey meanings corresponding to the traditional views of "original sin?"

(3) How were Scriptural passages such as Genesis 1-3, Psalm 51, Jeremiah 13, 17, John 3, Romans 5-7, 1 Corinthians 15, Ephesians 1-2, James 1, etc., understood? Trends in interpretation and exegesis were observed.

Historical and Cultural Influences

Indications of historical and cultural influence were watched for: the possible influence of (1) the theologies of New England; (2) denominational and religious roots; (3) doctrinal influences; (4) social influences; (5) methodological factors; (6) hermeneutical elements; and (7) apologetic factors.

The Ellen G. White Corpus

Ellen G. White is significant for the present discussion in that (1) she is recognized as the most authoritative and normative modern source of Adventist tradition; and (2) she has written a great deal on the subject of Adam's fall and the subsequent sinfulness of his posterity. Yet notwithstanding these important facts, her material must be approached with sensitivity to its historical context and should be carefully evaluated for correct understanding. Statements from her do not necessarily represent the Adventist position because not all writers agree on how to interpret them. Those individuals who advocate the need for a doctrine of original

sin quote her widely for the raw materials that appear in her works. The other side points out that she never used the designation "original sin" in a theological manner or formulated a systematic treatment of the doctrine in traditional terminology. It is possible, therefore, that a researcher may impose his own view on her writings and then extract meanings he himself has put there, but attribute those views to her.¹

It is generally acknowledged among Adventists that Ellen G. White did not attempt to write as a technical scholar.² It is the conviction of the SDA church that her mission was more prophetic than systematic with regard to theology, i.e., her concerns centered more in experiential application of truth than in the formulation of abstract thought, more with

¹This point is typified in an interchange in *Ministry* magazine of 1970 and 1971. In his article, "Outline Studies on Christian Perfection and Original Sin," p. 28, Robert Olson argued: "Mrs. White's comments are in perfect harmony with the Bible but they are given in much greater detail. Adam's sin is said to affect us in . . . three ways: (1) we are born in a state of guilt inherited from Adam, (2) we must die as a consequence of this condition, and (3) we are born with natural tendencies to evil." He then supports his position with statements by White: "On Guilt: 'As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death.'—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1074." He then comments, "We inherit guilt from Adam so that even a baby that dies a day after birth needs a Saviour though the child never committed a sin of its own. . . . They never sinned but they inherited a state of guilt from Adam, and so need a Saviour." Nearly a year later, Bruno Steinwig ("Perfection," p. 69) responded to the article by disagreeing with Olson on the question of original guilt. He quotes other passages from EGW and concludes "thus, it is clear that men do not receive guilt from Adam or from their parents until they participate in their sins." Both writers would undoubtedly contend that their view was Ellen White's view.

²As mentioned above, "original sin" is not a distinctly Biblical term. So far as the present writer has discovered, EGW used the designation only one time in her writings and then in a non-technical sense: "Every sin committed awakens the echoes of the original sin." See "The Warfare between Good and Evil," *RH* 78:16 (April 16, 1901):241. Yet she used other terms and phrases that sounded similar and seem to have conveyed related intentions: (1) "original propensities," (2) "inbred sin," (3) "inherent propensities," (4) "natural heart," (5) "inward sin," (6) "natural depravity," (7) "natural sinfulness," (8) "cultivated and hereditary tendencies," (9) "evil tendencies."

the affective domain than the cognitive. Hence, with regard to the subject of original sin, she does not attempt to articulate a developed, dogmatic treatment as a seminary professor might do. Furthermore, a valid hermeneutic for her writings would regard a responsible and sensitive study of the literary and historical context of her works as imperative to understanding them correctly.

In view of these considerations, the following presuppositions form the basis for use of the EGW corpus: (1) what she wrote can be illuminating to the subject in that it presents her insight into the practical dimensions of the Biblical material on human sinfulness; (2) what she has written on this subject is often open to differing interpretation; therefore, one opinion should not be considered the official position of the SDA church; (3) what she has written should be interpreted carefully in the light of her usage of terminology and the intent of her mission.

Organization of Data and Substance of Chapters

This investigation will set forth a general historical survey of the development of the doctrine of original sin in Christianity as a point of comparison. Since the study entails the organization and presentation of documentary evidence for the Adventist treatment of Biblical materials, such a historical survey seems apropos. However, the major objective of such a chapter is to provide models for comparison and is not intended to duplicate what a number of capable scholars have already done. It is rather to shed light on the later Adventist roots and development.

Subsequent chapters attempt to demonstrate the attitude and approach of SDA sources in the formative years of Adventist thought. The research emphasizes SDA periodicals and doctrinal books issued through

representative church channels, viz., denominational publishing houses, college presses, etc.

A final chapter will reflect on what was discovered. It takes the nature of an epilogue and commentary rather than an extended constructive theology, but it will suggest the significance of the findings for further dogmatic refinement.

CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL RESOURCES FOR THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

The history of the doctrine of original sin in Christian thought reveals studied attempts by theologians to account for the radical sinfulness of mankind on the bases of the Biblical record and human experience. The doctrine endeavors to understand the nature of man as it relates to the entrance of human sin.

The writers of Scripture present man as being less than what God intended him to be.¹ Christian theology has generally attributed this to man's "Fall."² Created "very good" "in the image of God,"³ man fell, that is to say, he rebelled, he apostatized, he openly disregarded the authoritative claims of God in favor of a life independent from the command of God.⁴ His

¹Compare what man was intended to be (Gen 1:26, 27, 31; 9:6; Ps 8:5), with what man is (Rom 3:10-20). The phrase "original sin" has two meanings in Christian theology: (1) the first sin of Adam and Eve; (2) the sinful disposition of Adam's offspring which is the seat of all sinful acts. Jewett, "Original Sin and the Fall of Man," p. 22. Cf. Gustaf Aulén, The Faith of the Christian Church (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1960), pp. 242-243: "The doctrine of original sin is concerned with man as a whole. . . . It [original sin] has its 'seat' in his inner being, in the inclination of the will, and applies, therefore, to man as a whole. . . . In the second place, the concept of original sin is also intended to view humanity as a whole. Sinfulness does not belong simply to separate individuals." Ibid., p. 243: "The word 'original sin' tells us that the solidarity of the race is solidarity in sin."

²See Gen 3:1-24.

³Gen 1:31, 27, 2:7.

⁴Rom 5:12ff.; 1 John 3:4, 5:16; Jas 4:17; Eph 2:1-3, 12.

own interests became the focal point of his existence replacing God as the center. Exactly how this happened and precisely what the Fall meant, so far as the descendants of Adam were concerned, has been the subject of centuries of theological discussion and debate.

While the whole Scriptural record testifies to the fact of man's undoneness, Rom 5:12-21 establishes in a formal way and in considerable detail a connection between Adam and his posterity which has fascinated theologians and has formed the base for the traditional doctrine of original sin.^{1,2} Systematic theology has pieced together the witness of Scripture into various theological positions involving sometimes complicated presuppositions. Before examining these theories and their development in greater detail, it seems helpful to look briefly at the primary Biblical data. This chapter does not deal in depth with the exegesis of the passages but rather anticipates relevant theological issues and discussion to follow in chapter III.

Old Testament Data

Scholars generally acknowledge that the classical (ecclesiastical) doctrine of original sin is not found explicitly stated in the writers of the Old

¹Other than Gen 3 and Rom 5, Scripture mentions the Eden Fall-story only in 1 Tim 2:14 where responsibility for open transgression is laid on Adam.

²By "traditional" and "classical" the present writer means to describe that view which holds that original sin "refers to the universal and hereditary sinfulness of man since the fall of Adam." Van A. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological Terms (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1964), p. 221. This is the same view which the SDA Ency. designates "traditional Christian theology" and defines as "personal moral guilt for Adam's transgression presumably inherited by every man." See SDA Ency., s.v. "Sin." This classical view is most often thought of in terms of the Augustinian tradition but there are variations within that tradition that make precise classifications difficult. These variations can be studied in greater detail in chapter III.

Testament.¹ What is found there is general in nature and related primarily to the undoneness of man.

The Fall of Man

The stories of man's creation and Fall, recorded in Gen 1-3, show original man as a created being, coming forth from the hand of his Creator on the sixth day of the first week, "in the image of God," "male and female," for the purpose of populating and superintending the earth.² Genesis 2 includes an elaboration on this creative act and introduces probationary instruction for Adam and Eve, the only existing members of the race.³ The next chapter relates the Fall-story and the curses of God pronounced on the serpent, the man, and the woman.⁴

The far-reaching effects of these curses upon the progeny of Adam are implied in such phrases as "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing," "he [the man] shall rule over you [the woman]," "cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;" "till you return to the ground . . . to dust you shall return."⁵

No mention is made in the Fall-story itself of the method of sin's propagation or whether Adam's children would be held accountable for the

¹New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1967 ed., s.v. "Original Sin," by I. Hunt. Cf. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, 1917 ed., s.v. "Original Sin," by F. R. Tennant; and J. Oliver Buswell, A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), 1:286.

²Gen 1:26-28.

³Gen 2:16-17.

⁴Gen 3:14-19.

⁵Gen 3:16-19.

sin of Adam in terms of guilt.¹ The Fall-story promises work, hardship, and death. Yet both Scriptural and experiential testimony demonstrate that estrangement from God affects man in a number of ways other than physically.²

Modern scholarship has challenged the historical character of this Fall-story narrative. Historical and source criticism, modern philosophy, liberal schools of religious thought, the natural sciences, the theory of evolution, and the simple difficulties inherent in the classical original sin doctrine itself have coalesced to erode the historical credibility of Gen 1-11.³ Even evangelicalism has shown some tendencies toward accommodating this possible line of reasoning.⁴ For example, neo-evangelical Donald Bloesch writes:

Several reasons can be advanced as to why the story of the fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 is no longer credible to many people. . . . With Reinhold Niebuhr we affirm not an ontological or transcendent fall but a historical fall. Yet this does not mean that

¹Walter Marshall Horton comments, "Critically examined, the early chapters of Genesis do not contain any doctrine of Original Sin, but only a series of wondering reflection upon 'the origin of death and suffering.'" Christian Theology (New York: Harper and Bros., 1955), p. 155. However, Catholic theologian Joseph Blinzler insists that there are indications of causation within the narrative that would imply the progeny of Adam as well: "Since, however, the narrative is undeniably aetiological in character, it does say, at least indirectly, that if since the fall men have found themselves in the same unhappy situation as their first parents, the reason for this is to be traced back to the first sin. Admittedly in the Hebrew literature of the Old Testament the account in Genesis has never been explained in this sense in so many words." Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, 1970 ed., s.v. "Original Sin."

²Gen 3:24.

³James L. Connor, "Original Sin: Contemporary Approaches," Theological Studies 29 (June 1968):215-219. Connor chronicles the Roman Catholic debate, but the equivalent can be seen in Protestant circles as well.

⁴For a delineation of modern distinctions between evangelicals, see Richard Quebedeaux, The Young Evangelicals: Revolution in Orthodoxy (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 37-41.

the story of Adam and Eve as presented in Genesis is itself exact, literal history.¹

Modern Catholicism has also experienced reinterpretative activity akin to that of Niebuhr and Brunner in response to the appeal of Paul VI to investigate the doctrine of original sin exegetically, within the limitations of church tradition, with the intention of making it more acceptable to the modern, science-oriented mind.²

The modern debate in Roman Catholicism over polygenism and monogenism is probably one which the Tridentine fathers would have scarcely imagined.³ Herbert Haag, a Roman Catholic theologian, calls the story of the

¹Donald G. Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 2 vols. (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 1:103. Bloesch lists those reasons and bounces the issues off between several theologians before finally stating his view recorded here. For Bloesch the importance of the Fall-story is not to be found in its exact historicity regarding a literal Adam and Eve but a common ancestor or ancestors "who forfeited earthly happiness by falling into sin." Likewise Paul Jewett insists that the Scripture writers are historically and culturally conditioned and that one cannot take their concepts of time as absolute. Yet Jewett insists that the Fall was a fall in history even as the Christ-event was an event in history. Even as it is not necessary to know the date of Christ's birth, it is not important to know the time of the Fall, but man fell. Jewett, "Original Sin and the Fall of Man," pp. 29-30.

²Paul VI, "Original Sin and Modern Science," The Pope Speaks 11 (1966):229-235. Such theologians as P. Schoonenberg, A. Alszeghy, M. Flick, L. Sabourin, and others have produced a great deal of material on the subject in the past two decades attempting to update the doctrine in the light of the scientific developments since Trent. For surveys of this work, see Conner, "Original Sin: Contemporary Approaches," pp. 213-140; T. P. Burke, "Man without Christ; An Approach to Hereditary Sin," Theological Studies 29 (March 1968):4-18. See also, George J. Dyer, "Original Sin: Theological Abstraction or Dark Reality?" Catholic Mind 77 (May 1979):11-23; Patrick Fannon, "The Changing Face of Theology," The Clergy Review 52 (May 1967):331-336; William Hamilton, "New Thinking on Original Sin," Herder's Correspondence 4 (1967):135-141; Herbert Haag, "The Original Sin Discussion, 1966-1971," Journal of Ecumenical Studies 10 (Spring 1973):259-289; Brian O. McDermott, "Current Theology: The Theology of Original Sin: Recent Developments," Theological Studies 38 (September 1977):478-512; Kevin F. O'Shea, "The Reality of Sin: A Theological and Pastoral Critique," Theological Studies 29 (June 1968):241-259; Leopold Sabourin, "Original Sin Reappraised," Biblical Theology Bulletin 3 (Fall 1973):51-81.

³Polygenism is the doctrine that man descended from a number of

Fall of Adam and Eve "folklore" which is designed merely to describe how sin entered the world.¹ Haag's approach, quite typical of a number of modern Catholic scholars, denies emphatically that the Biblical writer(s) is/are teaching that monogenism which has become so traditional in Catholic Christianity. He removes the discussion from the arena of theology by insisting that only science can solve such questions as polygenism and monogenism. The maneuver is intended to preserve a kind of original sin doctrine,² which is kept separate and therefore logically detached from scientific norms.³

Modern Catholic theology recognizes the dependence that the classical doctrine of original sin has placed on the historicity of the Fall-story, but in the interest of the modern mind, viz., the mind conditioned by the scientific method in particular, these theologians affirm the need to sever the traditional connection between the two. The approach is reminiscent of Brunner's desire to be "set free from bondage to Old Testament narrative,"⁴ and yet both Brunner and the Catholics, probably for different

ultimate ancestors rather than one pair (monogenism) as depicted in Scripture. Burke writes of "a species emerging only in one individual or couple (monogenism)" and man originating "more or less simultaneously and in various places, in a number of representatives (polygenism)." Burke, "Man without Christ," p. 5. See also Eugene H. Maly, Sin: Biblical Perspectives (Dayton: Pflaum/Standard, 1973), pp. 68-71. James P. Mackey and Herder Correspondence, "New Thinking on Original Sin," in The Mystery of Sin and Forgiveness, ed. Michael J. Taylor (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1971), pp. 215-232; Herbert Haag, Is Original Sin in Scripture? trans. Dorothy Thompson (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), pp. 74-79, 106-107.

¹Haag, Is Original Sin in Scripture? pp. 106-107.

²Ibid., p. 107.

³See Haag's rationale for his argument by way of the documentary hypothesis in *ibid.*, pp. 74-79.

⁴Emil Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974), p. 90.

reasons, are concerned that they be able to preserve the truth that is taught by the so-called "myth-narrative."¹

Undoubtedly these corrective attempts have been motivated to some degree by reaction to the uncritical approach to Gen 1-3 of the classical doctrine of original sin. For that view the historicity of Gen 1-3 has been considered crucial. It is a modern accommodation by theological scholarship that can now say with a degree of certainty, "Genesis 1-11 cannot be history in the modern, scientific sense of the word."²

Other General References

Those who hold to some form of the classical doctrine of original sin have perceived evil as being connected in some way to conception and birth. This has appeared to them to be an indication of inherited sin. Such notions have particularly been seen in Job 14:1-4 and Ps 51. The former passage reads as follows:

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower, and withers; he flees like a shadow, and continues not. And dost thou open thy eyes upon such a one and bring him into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one.³

A most often quoted Old Testament reference in this regard is David's penitential Ps 51, "Behold I was brought forth in iniquity, and in

¹Ibid. See also Haag's importunate attempt to safeguard Catholic idiosyncracies while excluding the traditional historicity of the Genesis account. Is Original Sin in Scripture? pp. 106-108.

²Conner, "Original Sin: Contemporary Approaches," p. 218.

³Job 14:1-4. This statement of Job's may well be a repetition of the words of Eliphaz (Job 4:17) indicative that all man are sinful and deserving of judgment. Cf. Robert Gordis, The Book of Job (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978), p. 147. The text recognizes man's universal sinfulness though no connection is made to Adam. See also Samuel Terrien, "Exegesis of the Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, 12 vols. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), 3:1010.

sin did my mother conceive me."¹ Martin Luther, representing the classical doctrine, interpreted this text to reveal why man sins—original sin causes sin. Wicked laws exist because wicked tyrants make them, marriages fail because wicked people make up the marriage union.

The prophet confessed publically that he was wicked by his own fault, not only by that of his parents, while he was growing and being formed as an embryo in the womb. Thus before she gave him birth, his mother was nourishing a sinner with her blood in the womb. We should hold the same thing about everyone who is born, ever was born, or ever will be born into this world, except Christ. The fact that John the Baptist and others were sanctified in the womb (Luke 1:15) does not abolish the fact that they were conceived in sin, just as the flesh still remains wicked in adults who have been sanctified by the Spirit and faith.²

Luther therefore placed the reason (not excuse) for sinning with man. He called the doctrine a "mystery" which does not submit itself to reason but is known only through the law and the promises of God.³ While it may be considered "natural" for man to will, it cannot be so considered for man to will to do good because man is radically and fundamentally corrupt. Such a doctrine is "the most difficult teaching of this psalm, yes, of all Scripture or theology," yet without it Scripture will never be understood correctly.⁴ Modern treatments of Ps 51 insist on a more careful contextual reading of the text and tend to see here simply that man is born with sinful propensities.⁵

¹Ps 51:5.

²Lectures on Psalms (LW, 12:350).

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 351.

⁵Blinzler puts it thus: "This innate sinfulness is to be understood rather as an innate proneness to sin than as an inherited state of sinfulness; and, most important of all, it is not connected with the fall of the first parents as its focus et origo." Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, s.v. "Original Sin."

Other explicit references to the undoneness of man include Jer 13:23: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil," and Jer 17:9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?" Biblical descriptions such as "the whole head is sick,"¹ and "all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment,"² together with the stories of the Old Testament which attest to the experience of man when his relationship is severed from God combine to form an overall view of man that is *one of non-rightness*.

In spite of these indicators of evil in mankind, no Old Testament writer connects man's dilemma with the Fall-story of Gen 3. Thus F. R. Tennant claimed that the doctrine of original sin was not an Old Testament teaching.³ Using as the standard definition for the doctrine of original sin, the connection of the Fall-story with man's present plight in terms of hereditary corruption, Tennant concluded:

When subjected to scientific exegesis, the story of Paradise and of the first sin contains no hint of the idea that sin involved the posterity of Adam in his punishment, nor of the idea that a fundamental corruption was introduced by that sin into human nature, to be inherited by all Adam's descendants.⁴

¹Isa 1:5. Cf. Eccl 7:29, Hos 6:7.

²Isa 64:6.

³F. R. Tennant, Original Sin (n.p., n.d.), p. 7, booklet, James White Library, Andrews University. Cf. F. R. Tennant, The Sources of the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), pp. 89ff. The same view is endorsed by Bernhard Lohse, A Short History of Christian Doctrine, trans. F. Ernest Stoeffler (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 100-101. Cf. Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, s.v. "Original Sin," by Joseph Blinzler. "A specific statement that the sin of the first parents is transmitted to each of their descendants—that is, the idea of original sin—is nowhere to be found [in the Old Testament]."

⁴Tennant, Original Sin, p. 5.

Tennant was not saying the Old Testament did not teach the evilness of man or the universal sinfulness of humanity,¹ rather, he was denying that the Old Testament concerns itself with the propagation of moral taint, that is, the transmission of spiritual pollution from the original parents, a concept that was later to occupy the thought of constructive theologians such as Tertullian and Augustine.² How can this be reconciled to the fact that Christian theology has seen original sin in the Old Testament when the doctrine is allegedly not there? While it is true, said Tennant, that in the Old Testament sins subsequent to Adam's are not connected to his, and that responsibility is attributed to the sinners of the second generation, it is also true that the Old Testament contains ideas that could be and later were incorporated into the notion of inherited sin.³

To summarize, while the traditional doctrine of original sin is not to be found in the Old Testament in the form it would later take in Christian thought, there are ideas that would be drawn upon by Christian writers who

¹Though he does point out that this universality of sin is restricted to the "later books." Ibid., p. 6.

²Blinzler gives a list of Old Testament texts on the universality of human sinfulness but clarifies it by asserting that the writers obviously had personal sin in mind. See Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, s.v. "Original Sin." Cf. Brunner, Creation and Redemption, p. 98. "Now it is extremely significant that, when the Bible speaks of sin, it never reminds us of the story of the Fall, either in the Old or in the New Testament. Thus the ecclesiastical doctrine, which is based entirely upon the idea of the Fall of Adam, and the transference of his sin to the succeeding generations, is following a method that is in no sense Biblical."

³Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin," by F. R. Tennant. "Sin is sometimes personified as a power external to man, in which we see exhibited the tendency, so disastrous in later theology, to conceive of sin in abstraction from the sinner, apart from whom it can have no existence. Man is credited with an evil imagination (yesser), though this imagination or disposition was not a result of the Fall. Sin is regarded as a state, as well as an isolated act. The universality of sinfulness is sometimes emphasized. Sin is occasionally spoken of as inherent in man from his birth, and in Ps 51 this inherent and inherited sinfulness is regarded as guilty."

would see the Old Testament through the eyes of the New and who would apply a Christo-centric, typological hermeneutic.

New Testament Data

The Synoptics and Johannine Literature

Jesus made no reference to a connection of universal sinfulness and the Fall-story of man in Eden, though he clearly indicated the need of humanity to experience repentance, new life, and conversion.¹ He assumes or implies man's evil: "you who are evil know how to give good gifts,"² "he did not trust himself to them because he knew all men . . . he himself knew what was in man."³ It was not uncommon for Jesus, in his parables, to depict God as searching for "lost" mankind or to view his own mission as "to seek and save that which was lost."⁴ This is also seen in the doctrine of the New Birth. Theology has seen the need for personal spiritual renewal as stemming from man's undoneness, alienation, and estrangement from God. And while such elements can hardly be construed as the developed classical doctrine of original sin, Christian theology has appealed to these remnants of thought as windows or parts of raw material to support the doctrine where it found stronger expression elsewhere in the New Testament.

It seems reasonable to conclude that any theological system that holds to the need for spiritual rebirth as requisite to man's salvation has within it the implication, if not the explication, of a doctrine of original sin, regardless of how the adherents of the system may term it.

¹See the account of the night visit of Nicodemus—John 3:1-21.

²Matt 7:11. Cf. Luke 11:13.

³John 2:23-25. No inherited taint is precisely taught.

⁴Luke 15:3-22; Matt 18:12-14; Luke 19:10. Cf. Matt 7:17-18, 19:4-8; Mark 10:5-8; John 3:6.

The Pauline Writings

It is commonly held that the explicit doctrine of original sin in Scripture is to be found most clearly in the writings of Paul.¹ Tennant

¹The non-canonical writings of Jewish thought had a parallel doctrine to the New Testament notion of original sin. Indications of this can be seen in: (1) Sir 25:24: "From a woman sin had its beginning and because of her we all die." (2) Wis of Sol 2:23-24: "For God created man for incorruption; and made him in the image of his own eternity, but through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it." (3) 2 Esdr 3:7: "And thou didst lay upon him one commandment of thine; but he [Adam] transgressed it, and immediately thou didst appoint death for him and for his descendants." (4) 2 Esdr 3:21: "For the first Adam, burdened with an evil heart, transgressed and was overcome, as were also all who were descended from him."

The latter description of the problem of original sin (Apocalypse of 4 Esdr 3-10 [same as 2 Esdr]) was written about 100 A.D. In this book the writer divulges a concern over Israel and sin similar to Paul's concern over mankind and sin. While the description of man's relation to Adam is similar the solution is quite different in that Paul finds the Gospel answer where the Jewish treatment is one of great ambiguity and despair. See Robert A. Bartels, "Law and Sin in Fourth Esdras and Saint Paul," Lutheran Quarterly 1 (August 1949):319-329. Bartels raises no question of literary dependence between these two accounts but rather suggests that they show the general religious atmosphere surrounding the Jews of the Diaspora and that both the early Christians and the Jews were concerned with the same issues (p. 329).

See further on this question (which is outside the scope of this dissertation), Horton, Christian Theology, p. 155; Buswell, Systematic Theology, I:286; and Niebuhr, "Sin," p. 350.

For a thorough discussion of the Jewish concept yeser hara see W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (London: SPCK, 1962), pp. 17-35; Norman Powell Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1927), pp. 37-92; and Hans Joachim Schoeps, "Paul's Misunderstanding of the Law," in The Writings of St. Paul, ed. Wayne A. Meeks (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1972), pp. 352-353. Schoeps points out that the yeser hara (impulse to evil) and yeser hatov (impulse to good) were, in Rabbinic writings, held to be in tension so that it lay with man's free will to decide which to follow. For Aqiba the Torah compensated for yeser hara making it possible for man to free himself. Not all rabbis agreed with this optimistic view, however. Yet Tennant insists that while this yeser doctrine has some parallels it cannot be construed to be a Jewish doctrine of original sin in that the yeser hara is not considered to have been derived as a consequence of Adam's sin. "It must be concluded then, that the only consequences of the Fall, for the human race, which were asserted in rabbinic teaching, are death and loss of the various supernatural adornments of Adam's life at its beginning. No diminished freedom of will, no permanent ascendancy of the yeser hara established for all generations, were ascribed to the first transgression. Nor do we find any reference to the idea of all the race being in Adam, or identified with Adam, when he sinned. Judaism possessed, indeed, the legend of the pollution

asserts that "Paul alone, amongst the first generation of Christian teachers, refers to the original entrance of sin into the human world, and connects, in any way, the sinfulness of the race with the first transgression."¹ The major Pauline passages, Rom 5, 6, 7; 1 Cor 15; and Gal 5, are the loci classici of the doctrine.² Luther wrote, "Paul is the only one of the Apostles to deal very seriously with this doctrine in particular."³ And, "but for this sentence [Rom 5:12] it would be hard to defend original sin with irrefutable texts."⁴ Although the apostle scatters his thoughts on universal sinfulness throughout his epistles⁵ it is in Rom 5:12-21 and 1 Cor

of Eve by Satan, and of the taint transmitted by her to her posterity. But this belief, though widespread, does not appear to have served the purpose of an explanation of universal sinfulness. Whether the defilement was understood to be of a moral kind is not made plain; but this fanciful story witnesses to the existence, in rabbinic circles, of a series of ideas which bear some sort of similarity to those which constitute the doctrine of original sin and hereditary infection in nature." Sources of Original Sin, p. 176. Cf. *Ibid.*, from pp. 169ff.

¹*Ibid.*, p. 249. Tennant maintains that no other Scriptural author throws any light on the matter of origin and mode of propagation of human sin (p. 248). He lists the sources of similar notions in Jewish literature which present a doctrine of original sin: Book of the Secrets of Enoch, Book of Enoch, Apocalypse of Baruch, Apocalypse of Ezra. See Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin." In the time of Paul, Tennant concludes, "Judaism . . . possessed two distinct conceptions of original sin. The one, presumably originating in the Alexandrian school, is stated in terms of the idea of inherited depravity or corruption, and is analogous to an important and characteristic factor of Augustine's doctrine. The other asserts, quite indefinitely, a connection between Adam's sin and his posterity's liability to punishment, and offers no connecting link between them; if we possess analogy with any later form of the doctrine of original sin, it would seem to be the imputation theory. The passage from this form of the Jewish doctrine to the teaching of St. Paul involves but a slight step." Cf. Reinhold Seeberg, Textbook of the History of Doctrines, 2 vols., trans. Charles Hay (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977 reprint), 1:31.

²Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 113. Williams holds Paul to be the "sole authority within the New Testament for the Adam-theory."

³Lectures on Psalms (LW, 12:350).

⁴Table Talk #271 (LW, 54:36).

⁵See Rom 3, 7; Eph 2.

15:21, 22, 45-49, that his typological Christ-Adam structures occur most vividly for the ecclesiastical doctrine.

Romans 5

Paul's argument in Romans begins with the revelation of man's hopelessness without a saving righteousness (chap. 1-3) and builds to a climax in the justification of Christ (3:21ff.) which is to be received by faith (chap. 4) and which has achieved "peace with God" (5:1). The second half of Rom 5 can best be understood by putting together verses 12, 18, and 21. Rom 5:13-17 are parenthetical verses in which Paul simply gives evidence for his assertion in vs. 12. Therefore Paul reasons, "as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin" (v. 12), "so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men" (v. 18). "So that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 21). The condemnation caused by Adam is vital to the main argument of Paul (vv. 16, 18, 19).

In this passage the Augustinian tradition has seen Paul attributing causality to Adam's transgression through which hereditary sin¹ is transmitted to his offspring. Therefore the soteriological significance of this passage has tended to suffer at the hands of theological anthropology.² Perhaps no

¹This was originally based on the Vulgate translation of the text which read that all mankind sinned "in Adam." This is explained in greater detail later in this chapter and in chapter III.

²Karl Barth was perhaps the foremost modern protagonist for the Christocentricity of Rom 5. For his view see his The Epistle to the Romans, 6th ed., trans. Edwyn Hoskins (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 149-187; and A Shorter Commentary on Romans, trans. H. D. van Daalan (London: SCM Press, 1959), pp. 61-63. Responsible critiques of Barth's work on Rom 5 have been offered by G. C. Berkouwer, The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), pp. 82-88, and John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959), 1:384-390.

better illustration of this phenomenon can be cited than those long debates between the traducianists and the creationists¹ in their attempts to discover the origin of the soul, that is to say, the immaterial substance or essence of man.

While both views condemned the pre-existence theory of the soul's origin as being pagan and unscriptural,² traducianism argued that the soul was passed on through natural generation from Adam.³ Hence one could explain how a person could be born "in sin" and thus be the recipient of a total, complete sinful nature.⁴ William G. T. Shedd wrote at length about the "non-individualized nature" present in Adam and Eve, the total human race at creation, that is spread by natural generation into millions of individuals.⁵ Shedd was not implying that God is responsible for the sinful

¹See an extended discussion by G. C. Berkouwer, Man: The Image of God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 279-309.

²Strong lists Plato, Philo, Origen, Kant, Julius Müller, and Edward Beecher as adherents of this theory. Augustus Hopkins Strong, Systematic Theology (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1907), p. 488. Critics of this doctrine insist it is unscriptural. Buswell, who asserts that the view is "wholly absent from the Bible," lists F. C. S. Schiller and F. R. Tennant as modern Christian proponents of the view. See Buswell, Systematic Theology, 1:248. Cf. Henry Clarence Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), p. 164; William G. T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2d ed., 3 vols. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1980), 2:10; and Baker's Dictionary of Theology, s.v. "Pre-Existence of Souls," by Gerald B. Stanton.

³Shedd understands the soul to be that "invisible principle" that "stands under" but "has no one of the geometrical dimensions." Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:10.

⁴To explain "how" is neither to explain "why" nor to excuse sin. See *ibid.*, 2:156ff.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 92: "The non-individualized nature in his person remains just as it came from Adam. Nor are his individual transgressions imputable to his children; because the portion of human nature which he has received, and which he transmits, does not act with him and sin with him in his individual transgressions. It is a latent nature or principle which remains in a quiescent state, in reference to his individuality. It is inactive, as existing in him. It does not add to or subtract from his individual power. It

nature but rather seeking to explain, through this realistic means, how man could be involved in Adam's sin.¹

Creationism, on the other hand, while also opposing the pre-existence theory, has argued that each new soul is an immediate creation of God, whether at conception or later.² Charles Hodge argued that this view was the "common doctrine of the Church."³ Though he cites very little Scriptural evidence, Hodge insists that this is the theory most consistent with the Biblical record as well as with the metaphysical nature of the soul. He argues from the philosophical presupposition that the soul is "indivisible," i.e., simple, and that only with the creationist position is the sinlessness of Christ preserved.⁴

constitutes no part of his individuality. Not until it is individualized, and being separated from the progenitor becomes a distinct person by itself, does it begin to act out the sinful disposition originated in it when Adam fell."

¹For Shedd sin is capricious, unnatural, irrational. It is a mystery, self-caused, incomprehensible. God is in no way responsible for it as its author for Adam originated it on earth and passed it on through evil inclination (a demonstration of human will). See *Ibid.*, pp. 113ff, and 156-159.

²Thiessen lists Aristotle, Ambrose, Jerome, Pelagius, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas as proponents of creationism. See Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, p. 232.

³Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1940), 2:70.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 70-72. These arguments are philosophical and speculative, and they tend to appear dated in the face of modern reasoning. Brunner has captured this irrelevancy: "The Either-Or of dogmatic theologians between 'Creationism' and 'Traducianism,' is a pseudo-problem. I, this human being, am evidently both a product of my ancestors and a new creation of God. We must assign the continuity to the preservation, the new element to the creation of God, whereby the question may remain open whether or not as a whole and apart from man each individual as such, in spite of all continuity and explicability of its elements from its, antecedents, is something new. This must in any case indubitably be claimed for the human person. Every human being is a new creation of God, every one is an original, and none is a product of a series, although in its cultural manifestation the originality may be very slight. Each human being is not only an individual but a person, and therefore directly related to God as its Creator." See Brunner, Creation and Redemption, pp. 34-35.

Notwithstanding the anthropological significance of Rom 5, it seems that theology must give Paul his contextual due and recognize the primary soteriological argument of this passage. Sinful nature is inseparable from man's physical, mental, and moral makeup; Paul thus argues that this forms the base for a necessary saving righteousness which only God can provide.

Historically, the major debates over the meaning of Romans 5 have been fought more intensely in the theological arena than the exegetical. Paul argues that through Adam sin entered the world and through sin all men die (v. 12), that is to say, death entered through sin and death permeates or persists through sin— ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον —"because all men sinned." The problem of this text becomes more apparent as one sees how theology has struggled to understand it.¹

Working from the Latin translation of the text, in quo omnes peccaverunt, Augustine understood Paul to be saying "in whom [Adam] all men sinned,"² that is, when Adam sinned, all humanity, or the whole human race, sinned because they were "in [the loins of] Adam." His reading of the passage shaped his doctrine of sin. Yet how much difference it actually makes if one understands the text to read "in whom," or, more correctly, "because"³ is a matter of theological rather than exegetical debate. A

¹For a discussion of this point see S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "Romans 5:12—An Exercise in Exegesis and Theology," in New Dimensions in New Testament Study, ed. Richard N. Longenecker and Merrill Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), p. 299.

²See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 308. Augustine followed a line of interpretation which included Ambrose and Ambrosiaster.

³For a critical discussion of ἐφ' ᾧ see William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1908), pp. 133-134, and John Murry, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959, 1965), 1:178-210. See Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, s.v. "Original Sin," by Joseph Blinzler, for a variety of Roman Catholic interpretations of Rom 5:12.

second example, the term ἥμαρτον , an aorist and thus denoting punctiliar action, has not convinced all Biblical scholars that mankind sinned when Adam sinned even though the Greek taken alone would seem to indicate that.

To sin "in Adam" can be understood either from Augustinian or Pelagian perspectives. Exegesis does not solve the problems which are left for theology. That death spread to all men because all sinned at the point in time of Adam's sin and by virtue of the totality of the human race being present in Adam's loins has not been a conclusion reached by all scholars. That Adam's descendants were affected because all followed his example into sin and expressed the same egocentricity was an alternative accepted by some Christians. Yet it is apparent that such issues are theological ones and that it remains to be explained how one is to understand the relation of Adam's sin to his posterity even after the passage is correctly translated.¹

Also involved in this discussion is the nature of the penalty called "death." The Westminster Confession explained that man suffered physical, spiritual, and eternal death as a result of Adam's sin.² This Confession

¹See Johnson, "Romans 5:12—An Exercise in Exegesis and Theology," p. 300, for a discussion on the relationship of exegesis and theology in regard to Rom 5:12. Johnson observes that to do good exegesis one must also engage in the theological task; that exegesis and theology are interdependent and that even if one obtains the correct reading of the text there are theological questions that have not been dealt with yet. Correctly rendered the text here would indicate: men "in their own persons, but as a result of the corrupt nature inherited from Adam." Yet unanswered are legitimate questions such as: "What does the passage have to say regarding the doctrine of original sin? What type of union between Adam and the race does the passage suggest? Is it realistic in the philosophical sense, as taught by Shedd? Or, is it realistic in the biblical sense, as taught by Augustine? Does the passage teach an imputation of sin? If so, is the imputation mediate or immediate? These questions arise legitimately out of the biblical text, and we are not doing 'depth exegesis' if we neglect them."

²The Westminster Confession of Faith [1646] 6.6 (Leith, 202): "Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous

emphasized the Atonement of Christ as the base for God's regenerative work on man's will and therefore a necessary transaction if the blight caused by original sin is to be at all remedied.¹ Early SDA theology took exception to this definition of death, as is seen later in this study, though it also emphasized the Atonement as the answer to the problem.

The corporate relationship of the race, the headship of Adam, the imputation of his sin, the Adam-Christ typology, the nature of sin—both original and actual—all are areas of traditional discussion stemming from this passage of Paul. Tennant's questions regarding Rom 5 sum up the inquiry: "Does St. Paul mean that death passed to all because all sinned personally, or because all sinned when Adam sinned?" "What did St. Paul conceive to be the mediating link between Adam's sin and the sin and death of his descendants?"² Berkouwer summarizes the question:

With no trace of exaggeration at all, we can say that the entire history of original sin dogma is decisively defined by the question of what is meant by these words in Romans 5:21b [sic]: "because all men sinned." In both realism and federalism, as well as in Calvin, this phrase has had a profound importance. This significance is more apparent when we bear in mind that it forms a

law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal."

¹The Westminster Confession explained that through the Fall man lost "all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation," but that the answer to "spiritual" death lay in conversion and regeneration which frees him "from his natural bondage under sin" (9. 3,4 [Leith, 205-206]). The Confession teaches that at the Fall man lost the "ability" to do good though not the "liberty" to do good. Man could not ever come to Christ as a result of the Fall (John 6:44). But regeneration changes this: "The regenerate man possesses the same absolute liberty as did Adam before the fall and sinners after the fall. The difference between an unregenerate man and a regenerate man is one of ability, not liberty." G. I. Williamson, The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1964), p. 86.

²Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin."

peculiar witness, within its own pericope, which is very rarely seen in other scriptural passages.¹

Other Pauline Passages

Romans 6-8 constitute the finale of Paul's theological treatment of soteriology in the epistle. Paul has established men in sin through Adam and in salvation through Christ.² Man is saved through the righteousness of God displayed at the cross (justification, acquittal) despite an inherent lack of native inclination toward God due to estrangement, i.e., "sinful condition."³ In Rom 6 Paul deals with man's freedom from the dominion of sin through Christ by way of regeneration. He presents baptism as the signification of one's turning from a past dominion where sinful propensities had the ruling hand to the "freedom" of new life in Christ.⁴ Sin no longer reigns legally because of Christ's reconciling work (implemented actually by regeneration).⁵ Paul's rationale is: just as Christ died actually so we died in him legally, and just as he was raised actually so we are quickened experientially, hence through justification we move to the new status of adoption in which we are set apart, i.e., we belong to God (ἀγιοσύνη)⁶ and we are freed from the control or dominion of sin—both its intimidation strengthened by the law's charges against us, as well as passion's grip.⁷ Pursuit of right-doing is legitimate for a person in correct legal standing

¹G. C. Berkouwer, Sin (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 491.

²Rom 5:12-21.

³Rom 5:1-11, "enemies," "ungodly."

⁴Rom 6:4.

⁵Rom 6:12-14.

⁶Rom 6:19.

⁷Rom 6:14.

before God, and Paul can thus exhort: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies to make you obey their passions."¹

Romans 7 extends this argument to the area of the Christian's response to God through a living, working faith in the face of subdued but present indwelling sin. Even without a dominion sin is a pest; it needles and attempts to thwart all efforts of response to God. Paul characterizes sin as a tyrant and by a number of figures that vivify his word pictures: "our old self," "the sinful body," "the passions" of "your mortal bodies," "the first husband," "our sinful passions," carnality, the "law of sin which dwells in my members," and this "body of death."²

Sin is a principle or a law working from within.³ It binds and would conquer were it not for the regenerating work of the Spirit. Here is original sin in the sense of that sinful disposition, commonly called "depravity," which produces sinful acts.⁴ Contemporary theology has seen little point in debating in traditional Augustinian armor, but it has recognized that one of the consequences of the Fall is "man in revolt" caused by anxiety suffered in the face of alienation from the God who created man

¹Rom 6:19.

²Rom 6:6, 12; 7:2, 3, 5, 23, 25, 24.

³Rom 6:12.

⁴"Total depravity" is that doctrine which holds that all of man has been affected by sin—the corruption of the whole nature. It is the doctrine of sin as a state of being, that man's whole nature is fallen. This is not to be understood as teaching that man is totally unable to do anything good or right, i.e., loving children, parents, etc., though it does imply the total inability of man to save himself or to order correctly a consistent righteous life-style. See James Denney, Studies in Theology (n.p.: Hodder and Stoughton, 1895; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), pp. 82-86. The Protestant Reformation saw depravity, both original sin and indwelling sin, as corruption or vitium (ἁμαρτία), to be the Scriptural teaching. See Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:231. Cf. Jewett, "Original Sin and the Fall of Man," p. 22, and Aulén, Faith of the Christian Church, pp. 242-243.

to be in relationship with him.¹ Stott, a conservative theologian, speaks of the "infection of human nature" as that bias or tendency towards sin, inherited and deeply rooted in man, that "manifests itself in a thousand ugly ways."² Reformed theology has found it useful to distinguish between "original sin" and "indwelling sin" in Rom 7, the latter being what remains of the former once regeneration has taken place.³

The struggling man finds assurance not in his struggling but in the gospel: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus," and Paul finishes his argument on the victorious note of God's work through the Holy Spirit.⁴ The inmost self (ἔσω ἄνθρωπον),⁵ often interpreted as conscience,⁶ man's rational will,⁷ or the new creature,⁸

¹Brunner, Creation and Redemption, pp. 118-119, 124-128.

²John R. W. Stott, Basic Christianity (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1958), p. 76.

³Shedd means by indwelling sin that the principle of sin in the members is enfeebled by regeneration and remains in a mortally wounded condition which allows for Christian victory. See Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:212ff. Cf. W. G. T. Shedd, Commentary on Romans (n.p.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1879; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), pp. 216ff. For a treatment on the entire question of indwelling sin from a Reformed standpoint see John Owen, Indwelling Sin in Believers (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979). See also Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, rev. ed. (1886, reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), pp. 236-237.

⁴Rom 8:1ff.

⁵Rom 7:22.

⁶Ernst Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), p. 209. John Murray goes beyond conscience when he interprets the inner man as the "determinate will to the good." See Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, 1:266.

⁷See *ibid.*

⁸Hodge, Epistle to the Romans, pp. 234-235; Shedd, Commentary on Romans, pp. 213-214. Cf. John Calvin, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle

gains priority over the law of sin in one's members and regeneration through the Spirit produces a relatively consistent ethical life.

Paul's argument in Romans has therefore been heavily drawn upon by those who believe in a radical view of sin. It is quite apparent that for Paul sin is far more than merely outward acts. Sin is a power and a pollution that produces the worst when not counteracted by grace. While ethical life has no soteriological value for Paul, it is envisioned as a possibility and a necessary response to the saving work of the gospel.

Another passage very similar in structure to that of Rom 5 is 1 Cor 15 in that it too uses the Adam-Christ typology. Paul introduces the notion with a common expression of Old Testament solidarity.¹ However, where Rom 5 dealt with man's inheritance of sin, 1 Corinthians deals with man's inheritance of death from Adam.

For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. . . . The first Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. . . . The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.²

One notes immediately that the stress in this chapter is on Adam's legacy of death rather than his transmission of sin, that is, the fact of death and the need for resurrection as opposed to how sin has been passed on to Adam's progeny. There is no question that sin and death are partners,

to the Romans and to the Thessalonians, trans. Ross Mackenzie, eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960), p. 153: "The inward man, therefore, does not simply mean the soul, but the spiritual part of the soul which has been regenerated by God."

¹George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing co., 1974), p. 403. Cf. H. Wheeler Robinson, Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

²1 Cor 15:12, 22, 45, 47.

yet Paul builds his theme in this passage not around sin but around death.¹

In Gal 5 Paul gives a brief contrast between walking "by the spirit," and living according to the "works of the flesh."² Here is another implication for human depravity. "The flesh" is not always used uniformly in the Pauline corpus but when placed in contrast to "the spirit" it refers to a certain kind of man who is misdirected by self-centeredness and self-satisfaction. In the words of D. R. G. Owen, "in traditional theological language, 'the flesh' stands for 'fallen,' sinful, unregenerate man."³ Paul admonishes the Galatians to "walk by the Spirit," a duty of Christians clarified by his catalog of "works of the flesh"; "fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like."⁴ Together with a total Pauline picture of fallen humanity, this lifestyle is indicative of those who are depraved through Adam, though no direct mention of the source of such sins is elaborated upon in this epistle.

¹See 1 Cor 15:17, 42, 43. Cf. Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 490-491: With regard to sin "the Romans 5 passage carries the great weight, since in 1 Corinthians 15:22 the accent is exclusively on death. . . . Paul, in this context, sets the themes of death and life alongside each other and does not really mention the theme of sin at all. He speaks of a 'dying with Adam.' And yet this theme is easily combined with the statement in Romans 5 that death has come into the world by sin. In that way, therefore, the Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15 passages have come to be seen together as the [p. 491] loci classici of the original sin doctrine. Theologians have seen 1 Corinthians 15:22 as the 'proof-text' for a dying in Adam and Romans 5 as a 'proof-text' for sinning in Adam." Blinzler points out that 1 Cor 15 sets forth the "doctrine of death as an inherited penalty" and that the reason for the fact of death is to be found somehow in Adam. See Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, s.v. "Original Sin."

²Gal 5:13-26.

³"'Body' and 'Soul' in the New Testament," in Man's Need and God's Gift, ed. Millard J. Erickson (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), p. 94. Compare Rom 7:5, 14, 18; Rom 8:1-11.

⁴Gal 5:16, 19-21.

Finally, Paul develops the theme of sinfulness in his letter to the Ephesians. He writes of those outside of Christ being "by nature children of wrath."¹ Paul is evidently speaking of man's depravity but this does not mean he is writing an essay on original sin in the classical sense. Rather he is speaking of those Jews being as much deserving of wrath as those Gentiles whom they often condemned.² Paul says nothing about Adam's sin here and the term "by nature" does not necessarily have to mean "innate."³ However, through separation sinners are "without God in the world,"⁴ a concept which may prove helpful in maintaining the relational view of sin's nature. Markus Barth describes man in his state of estrangement from God:

Symptoms and signs of "trespasses and sins" are described with a wide array of terms. The typically Pauline (and Johannine) terms "flesh" and "darkness" are used for them (2:3; 5:8). "Flesh" means the totality of man's spiritual, psychic, and physical perversion and bondage to evil. Whether men are circumcised or not (i.e., whether Jew or Gentile by origin), they are "in the flesh" (2:11). "By nature" (2:3) men are "sons of disobedience" (2:2; 5:6) and therefore "children of wrath" (2:3). They are aliens and strangers from the promises, the covenants, and the community of Israel. They are hopeless and godless in the world (2:12). Not knowing of the mystery of Christ (3:9), they live in the vanity of their minds. Because of a hardened heart, their status is alienation from the life

¹Eph 2:3.

²Compare Rom 1-2.

³Williams argued that the phrase ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς cannot be used as a proof text for original sin in this passage since φύσει simply means "in ourselves" rather than a fuller implication indicated by "by nature." The text merely means that all, Jews and Gentiles alike, were, prior to their conversion, actual sinners deserving God's wrath. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 113. Cf. Francis Foulkes, The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 70-71. On the Hebraism used here see Helmut Köster, "φύσις," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 9 vols., ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), 9:272-275.

⁴Eph 2:12.

of God. They are callous, and they deliver themselves to licentiousness, impurity, and greediness (4:17-19) . . . The sum total of what is said about man is contained in the words death, enmity, alienation, darkness (2:1, 5, 12, 14, 16; 4:18, 5:8). All these terms describe a separation and presuppose the existence of an insurmountable wall.¹

While the traditional doctrine of original sin moves from Adam's actual sin to the separation of man as a consequential inheritance of Adam's posterity (1 Peter 1:18), an innovative doctrine of estrangement would explain actual sin as a result of a disordered life without God. The advantage of the latter construction, while not unrelated to the former, is that the preoccupation with guilt, and almost Manichean forms of evil are dispensed with. Man is sinful in that he is separated from a correct relationship with what would make him righteous. In such an estrangement he operates out-of-harmony with love and is therefore deserving of wrath.²

Summary

A brief critical survey of the Biblical material on man's sinful condition reveals that Scripture assumes or implies a basic undoneness of man throughout its pages but explicitly connects that undoneness causatively to Adam's sin in the Pauline writings.³ As a theological designation original

¹Markus Barth, The Broken Wall (Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1959), pp. 94-95.

²Contemporary theology has made much of this kind of construction to the extent that the modern mind can find it more acceptable than the Augustine tradition. See for example, Bernard Ramm's discussion on Kierkegaard, Brunner, Niebuhr, Barth, and Tillich, in A Handbook of Contemporary Theology (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 117-119. Adventist theology has built on this perspective and thus has anticipated modern thought. Particularly in the theology of Edward Heppenstall is this spelled out. See Heppenstall, The Man Who Is God, pp. 118-128, and Salvation Unlimited (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1974), pp. 7-25.

³For further study on the Biblical questions surrounding the concept of original sin see: Luis Alonso-Schökel, "Sapiential and Covenant Themes in Genesis 2-3," Theology Digest 13 (Spring 1965):3-10; William Barclay,

sin can refer to either the transmission of guilt or the general depravity of man in consequence of Adam's sin or to both of them. The Scriptural data therefore gives basic subject matter that provides the substance for a doctrine of original sin, but as the next chapter shows, not all theologians have interpreted that material in the same way.

"Great Themes of the New Testament, III:Romans v. 12-21," Expository Times 70 (February 1959):132-135; Karl Barth, Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956; C. E. B. Cranfield, "On Some of the Problems in the Interpretation of Romans 5.12," Scottish Journal of Theology 22 (September 1969):324-341; F. W. Danker, "Romans V.12. Sin Under Law." New Testament Studies 14 (April 1968):424-439; Kenneth Kinghorn, "Biblical Concepts of Sin," Wesleyan Theological Journal 1 (Spring 1966):21-26; T. A. Kantonen, "The Cause of Sin," Lutheran Quarterly 5 (August 1953):259-279; James I. McCord, "'Know Thyself;' The Biblical Doctrine of Human Depravity," Interpretation 3 (April 1949):142-153; Regin Prenter, Creation and Redemption, trans. Theodor I. Jensen (Philadelphia: Forgress Press, 1967), pp. 284-288; J. J. Scullion, "New Thinking on Creation and Sin in Genesis I-XI," Australian Biblical Review 22 (October 1974):1-10; Stephen J. Stein, "Stuart and Hodge on Romans 5:12-21: An Exegetical Controversy about Original Sin," Journal of Presbyterian History 47 (December 1969):340-360; Lionel Swain, "The Bible and the Origin of Sin," Clergy Review 52 (May 1967):337-344; S. Trooster, Evolution and the Doctrine of Original Sin, trans. John A. Ter Haar (Glen Rock, NJ: Newman Press, 1968):75-88; Colin Williams, "The Corporateness of Sin," Engage/Social Action 1 (April 1973):7-11; John Wren-Lewis, "What Was the Original Sin?" Expository Times 72 (March 1961):177-180; John Wren-Lewis, "When Did the Fall Occur?" Expository Times 72 (October 1960):4-7; Jean Zurcher, "The Christian View of Man," Andrews University Seminary Studies 2, 3, 4 (January 1964, January 1965, January 1966):156-168, 66-83, 89-103.

CHAPTER III

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

The Old Testament had no well-defined doctrine of original sin. While it narrated the Fall-story it articulated no clear connection between Adam and his descendants in the terminology of inherited sinfulness or inherited guilt. Thus it is understandable that Judaism accorded no dogmatic status to such a notion in its teachings.¹ The doctrine gained its Biblical credibility² from the general Old Testament recognition of universal human sinfulness and the specificity of certain New Testament passages, particularly among the writings of Paul.

¹Lohse, Short History, pp. 100-101. Lohse points out that Judaism arrived at conceptions on sin that were similar to those of Christianity. This has been shown briefly above (see p. 33, footnote 1). In addition to the bibliographic material listed there see the review of Jewish traditions in the world of 200 BC-AD 150 in Bruce J. Malina, "Some Observations on the Origin of Sin in Judaism and St. Paul, Catholic Biblical Quarterly 31 (January 1969):18-34.

²It is admittedly difficult to define carefully the meaning of such terminology as "Biblical credibility," "Biblical view," "Biblical position," and the like. However, while one must recognize that these terms carry a certain amount of subjectivity, they also represent the goal of the bulk of Christian theology, i.e., to arrive at a view that truly represents the teaching of the Bible. When these terms are employed in this dissertation, the present writer is speaking more of that ideal than of some dogmatic achievement. A Biblical view would be one that has taken seriously the elements and data of Scripture. Obviously there are elements of interpretation that the church will never completely agree on. There are perspectives of which no one theologian can hope to achieve total understanding. But to recognize that should not impede the motivation to attempt to achieve it. The reader is thus reminded here that the quest is for a Biblical view—one that seeks to understand the Bible elements and message from its most obvious, contextual meaning.

In the early church the doctrine was developed from a Christological perspective because of Paul's typology in Rom 5.¹ Unique to the doctrine, from the standpoint of development, was the fact that it stemmed from both anthropological and soteriological concerns.² Man was brought into involvement with sin through the head of the race, Adam, and man was delivered from that involvement with sin through the saving work of the new head of the race, Jesus Christ.³ Taking their cues from Paul, Christian theologians came to recognize and emphasize the radical (root) nature of sin as it related to one's absolute need of the saving work of Christ.⁴ But a doctrine expressed in the terminology of hereditary guilt rather than hereditary corruption was still several centuries away from the Bible writers and took a considerable amount of time to form.⁵

¹Lohse, Short History, p. 101.

²Ibid., p 100.

³Rom 5:12, 18.

⁴An example of this is Irenaeus' recapitulation doctrine stated as follows: "He [Christ] came to save all through means of Himself. . . . He therefore passed through every age . . ." Against Heresies 2.22.4 (ANF, 1:391). "For by one man's disobedience sin entered, and death obtained power (a place) through sin; so also by the obedience of one man righteousness having been introduced shall cause life to fructify in those persons who in times past were dead." Ibid. 3.21.10 (ANF, 1:454). "But inasmuch as it was by these things that we disobeyed God, and did not give credit to His word, so was it also by these same that He brought in obedience and consent as respects His Word; by which things He clearly shows forth God Himself, whom indeed we had offended in the first Adam, when he did not perform His commandment. In the second Adam, however, we are reconciled, being made obedient even unto death." Ibid., 5.16.3 (ANF, 1:544).

⁵For the new church to develop a doctrine of sin as a locus of Christian theology was to venture into new theological territory. Early Christians had fought theological battles in the areas of Theology, Christology, and Pneumatology, all related topics, but anthropology and hamartiology had not been seriously dealt with. Brunner writes, "In the early days of the Church, until the time of St. Augustine, the doctrine of sin was comparatively little developed. The interests of theologians were absorbed in the conflict against Gnosticism, against Monarchianism, Subordinationism, and Arianism, and later on, almost entirely, by the problem

No Christian doctrine develops in a vacuum.¹ Consequently Christian thought is understood more adequately when studied in the historical setting of the factors surrounding its development. Just as the New Testament canon developed through reaction to Marcion and others attempting to invoke authoritative norms, so other doctrines found their way to dogmatic status through argument and debate by principal Christian teachers in the setting of various stresses. The major purpose of this chapter is to examine a few of these stresses and reactions both to understand the issues entailed in the Christian heritage and the emerging thought, as well as to learn how things were when Adventism finally came on the scene.²

of Christology." Creation and Redemption, p. 113. And Lohse has observed, "The attempt is now to clarify dogmatically a certain affirmation of faith which is distinct from the doctrine of God. In doing so the Christian faith exhibits its full peculiarity as well as its difference from other religions, notably Judaism. In general, the latter knows no dogmas or, at least, only one, namely, that the Lord alone is God and that beside him there are no other gods. Christianity and Judaism are similar in this, that faith in God, though differently understood, is the basic dogma, the basic confession. The Christian faith departs markedly from Judaism, however, in its dogmatic assertion of certain conceptions of sin and grace." Lohse, Short History, p. 100.

¹ Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 118-122, Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, pp. 248ff. R. S. Moxon, arguing for the scanty Scriptural base of the doctrine, points out that Christ left no recorded utterance on this subject. See Reginald Steward Moxon, The Doctrine of Sin (New York: George H. Doran, 1922), p. 17. Williams speculates that Paul picked up the notion of the Christ-Adam typology from Galilean disciples of Jesus. However, while Williams admits that a clear understanding of how Jewish notions in fact came into early Christian thinking is lacking, he also cautions against the idea that Christians initially attempted to begin a unique sect when actually their original intent was to provide a more fulfilled view of Jewish understandings of God and his involvement with mankind. See Ideas of the Fall, p. 118.

²It needs to be stated at the outset that the present writer has no intention of presenting a complete history of the doctrine of original sin in this chapter. The purpose here is to grasp the major concerns of significant figures in the Christian heritage which eventually led to the tradition which Adventist heritage has found most helpful. Eastern Orthodoxy, for example, does not figure largely in this survey. Some mention is made of early eastern thought trends which later surfaced in Adventist thought (though the genetic connection is not clear). But Adventism is a

The Issues for the Church

John Hick has observed that in spite of the "notoriously difficult" task of interpreting Paul's teaching there are a number of issues on which theologians have generally agreed. For Paul (1) Adam's sin brought death to the entire race—both spiritually and physically; (2) The experience of death by the race is to be understood in terms of corporate solidarity and Adam is the causative factor; (3) Sin and death have come to the race in the form of a "tendency to sin which is part of our inherited psycho-physical make-up"; (4) Inherited tendency causes actual sin; (5) As these maladies came through Adam, they are abolished through Christ—one man in each instance; (6) Evil spirits add to the work of evil human beings to plague the church and exercise great power.¹ Hick concludes:

There is thus clearly present in St. Paul the root idea of what was later to be called "original sin," namely the idea of a sinful bias or tendency which operates in all human beings, but which is nevertheless not created de novo by each individual for himself.²

product of western thought and there the connections can be established through historical study. This chapter does not function as a new contribution to theological scholarship but as a brief examination of how Christian thought leaders handled Biblical resources of the doctrine of original sin and what models Adventism fell heir to. The fulfillment of this task bears an added benefit for Adventist scholarship, i.e., that a clearly defined set of models can be helpful for constructive, precise theology.

Adequate and comprehensive surveys have been done by Tennant [Sources of Original Sin], Williams [Ideas of the Fall], Moxon [Doctrine of Sin], Julius Gross [Entstehungsgechichte des Erbsündendogmas. Band: von der Bibel bis Augustinus (Munche: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1960); Entwicklungsgeschichte des Erbsündendogmas. Band 2: im nachaugustinischen Altertum und in der Vorscholastik (Munche: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1963), Henri Rondet [Le Péché Originel dans Tradition Patristique et Théologique (Paris: Fayard, 1967); Alfred Vanneste [Le Dogme du Péché Originel, trans. from Dutch by A. Freund (Lourain: Nauwelaerts, 1971). J. N. D. Kelly [Early Christian Doctrines, 2d ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1960)], and H. Shelton Smith [Changing Conceptions of Original Sin (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955)]. In addition to these are a number of short histories of Christian thought, many of which are listed in the Bibliography of this dissertation. The present chapter does not propose to duplicate the work of these scholars nor compete with it, but rather to draw on their work.

¹Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 206.

²Ibid., pp. 206-207.

Christian thinkers in general have found a degree of agreement that this is what Paul meant. But in their attempt to analyze and reflect on the implications of these thoughts extraneous notions have been added to or drawn from these concepts.

Another observation is that of N. P. Williams at the beginning of his treatment of the doctrine's development. He lists five basic questions which theology has struggled with in its interpretation of Scripture and its development of the doctrine:

(i) Is the Adam-story historical truth or allegory? (ii) What was man's unfallen condition—non-moral innocence, or 'Original Righteousness'? (iii) What exactly is the undesirable thing, state, or quality alleged to have been communicated by the first man to his descendants? (iv) What was the mode of this communication—physiological or merely social heredity, mystical or physical identity? (v) What is the resulting state of human nature, with which Redemption now has to deal?¹

Hick's list contains the areas of consensus on Paul while Williams presents the list of debatable issues which grows out of that consensus. Some have held that the Biblical record is not explicit in its answers to these five questions; therefore, theology has debated them, often from the standpoint of some other root biases. While not attempting to answer these questions for each theologian (a task Williams has already completed) this study keeps these issues as a backdrop in considering major thought leaders in Christian thought development.

From the Early Church to Augustine

Early Christian writers of the first and second centuries seem to have been relatively unaffected by Paul's doctrine of original sin. Tennant has suggested that these writers "started afresh to elaborate a doctrine of

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. xvi; cf. pp. 165ff.

original sin" without much apparent help from the New Testament witness in general and the Pauline witness in particular.¹ Inherited guilt is not clear until possibly Cyprian (d.258), and then only in western tradition.²

Early Christianity was dogged for decades by various Gnostic groups.³ The major result of this struggle relative to hamartiology was an

¹Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin." Cf. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, pp. 208-209: "The first few generations of Christians were very largely 'starting from scratch' when they speculated on this subject, and we are therefore free, if there seems good reason to do so, to return behind the later dogmas to the freedom of that earlier period—learning something, however, we may hope, from the difficulties in which the later theologians sometimes became entangled."

²Pelikan comments that "it was Cyprian, the defender of the Church Catholic, who articulated the doctrine in a formula that came to be recognized as both novel in its language and orthodox in its meaning, thus expressing simultaneously the continuity of the Christian faith and the development of the doctrine." Pelikan, Development of Christian Doctrine, pp. 93-94. Undoubtedly due to their more modern bias, neither Moxon nor Brunner seem willing to concede such a doctrine before Augustine. See Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 18, and Brunner, Creation and Redemption, p. 114.

³Indications of this battle are already seen in the New Testament in 1 Corinthians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, the pastoral epistles, 1 John, and the Revelation of John (the Nicolaitans—Rev 2-3). However, the harassment carried on after the time of the apostles. Leading Gnostic teachers included Valentinus (2d century), Basilides (2d century), and Marcion (d.160). This philosophically oriented movement which derived its name from the Greek γνῶσις, emphasized the importance of revealed knowledge that made redemption possible. See W. T. Jones, The Medieval Mind, 2d ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1969), pp. 60-63, for a brief philosophical summary of Gnosticism. Of particular significance to this study is the view of evil held among the Gnostics. Evil and good were in dualistic relation to each other. Evil resided in matter, a notion which caused some philosophical difficulty with regard to the doctrine of the incarnation (the docetists). From the Gnostic standpoint a divine Christ would preclude the taking of a real, material body. This distinction between the Spiritual (πνευματικός) and the Fleshly (σαρκικός) or Material (ὕλικος) was a central feature of the Gnostic systems of thought. Evil was substantial in that man needed redemption from material evil rather than relational evil, or bad environment. On this see Jean Daniélou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, trans. and ed., John Austin Baker (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1973), pp. 397ff. See also The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1982 ed., s.v. "Gnosticism." Lohse evaluates, "Where we find detailed treatments of original sin in the theology of the second and third centuries, these have frequently been developed under the influence of Gnosticism and its negative view of matter and of the body. . . . The church found it equally difficult to interpret the declarations of the New

optimism toward man's natural abilities, an optimism that lasted three centuries.¹ While there are hints of moralism in the New Testament, the Gnostic pessimism caused this serious over-reaction so that man is perceived as morally perfectable.² And from such seed thoughts early teaching developed what Lohse has termed "nothing more than a pure righteousness of works."³

Testament in a way which would restrict the error of Gnosticism but which, at the same time, would do justice to the radical nature of the New Testament concept of sin. Little wonder, then, that the church searched gropingly for a season, now giving preference to the concept of free will, and then again to the condemnation of matter." Lohse, *Short History*, pp. 104-105. Cf. W. H. C. Frend, "The Doctrine of Man in the Early Church: An Historical Approach," *Modern Churchman* 45 (Sept. 1955):217.

¹Frend writes, "Under the challenge of Gnostic dualism, the view of man upheld by the Greek-speaking Church in the first three centuries A.D. was optimistic. The Gnostics, as is well known, were teaching the divorce of God from creation, of the spiritual from the fleshly, of the saved from the rest of humanity. Creation they ascribed either to some contrary power, or to a primal catastrophe (a Fall outside Time) which destroyed the previous harmony of the heavens. The visible world, including man, was the result of this catastrophe, and the great majority of mankind were under the power of demons who dwelt in the plants, and lorded over the world. Among a few fortunate ones, however, a spark of Divinity survived, and it was for their sake that a Divine Saviour was sent by God with a message of salvation. Through divine illumination these predestined few would be brought to remember their true selves, and so, armed with divine gnosis, would be able to make their way through the spheres that circled the earth back to the kingdom of light. These 'Spiritual Beings' could not sin and, conversely, no amount of good works would aid any who were not predestined to salvation. There was no hope for the world, and the hallmark of sin was the act of propagating the human species." Frend, "Man in the Early Church," pp. 217-218. Frend then suggests that it is no wonder that the Pelagian doctrine found more acceptance in the East because the Eastern church had more thoroughly accepted the optimistic reaction against Gnostic pessimism.

²Ibid., p. 218. "The Fall may have darkened that image [of God in man]," writes Frend of these early theologians' thought, "but it had not extinguished it altogether."

³Lohse, *Short History*, p. 102. Lohse adds asceticism as an impediment to earlier development of the doctrine of sin. "The spread of the ascetic ideal was bound to revitalize faith in the unimpaired ability of man to lead a pure and sinless life before God" (p. 106).

The Apostolic Fathers

For the Apostolic Fathers of the Christian church, man had free will and there was no sin that could keep him from making correct decisions and avoiding evil ones.¹ The Didache, for example, emphasized love to God and neighbor, the avoidance of gross sins, the opposition of lust, and the importance of proper conduct toward various groups of people.² This moralism is characteristic of the Fathers in general and though there is recognition of the universality of sin,³ and one mention of the first sin,⁴ there is no causative connection made between Adam's initial sin and the sinfulness of his posterity.⁵

¹Ibid., p. 104.

²See Didache 1-6. This is Seeberg's outline. He explains: "The Didache also quotes with approval the counsel which we have found adopted by Barnabas: 'If thou hast by (the work of) thy hands, thou shalt give a ransom for thy sins' (v. 6). . . . He maintains this life in earnest moral striving and in perpetual penitence, and is thus prepared for the approaching judgment and its terrors." Seeberg, Textbook of Doctrines, 1:75.

³See The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians 5, and The Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians 19.

⁴In The Epistle of Barnabas 12 (ANF, 1:45) is found this statement: "For since transgression [ἡ παράβασις] was committed by Eve through means of the serpent, (the Lord) brought it to pass that every (kind of) serpents bit them, and they died, that He might convince them, that on account of their transgression they were given over to the straits of death." Williams points out that ἡ παράβασις is the technical term used in later Greek theology for the Fall.

⁵Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 165: "It must be admitted that, as compared with the New Testament, the Apostolic Fathers as a whole are not guilty preoccupied with sin, and that their writings exhibit a marked weakening of the atonement idea." Essentially all authorities agree that there is no hint, or as Lohse describes it, "hardly an inkling," of the later doctrine of original sin in the Apostolic Fathers. Short History, pp. 103-104.

Development of the Eastern View of Sin

The Greek Apologists

In the Biblio-philosophical writings of the Greek Apologists¹ can be seen a trend toward what is properly called an Eastern view of sin.² This view would dominate the early thinking of the Eastern church on sin. While the Apologists do not represent a clearly systematic approach to Christian theology, they do present the beginnings of the church's attempts to build such a theology.³

¹For a list of names and dates of the Greek Apologists, see the following sources: Johannes Quasten, Patrology, 3 vols. (Utrecht: Spectrum Publishers, 1966), 1:186-253, and Edgar J. Goodspeed, A History of the Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 94.

²Hick lists two types of theodicy in early Christian thought: Irenaean and Augustinian. He sees the former as developing through the Hellenistic fathers to Irenaeus. However, he does not mean to suggest that this became a view which the contemporary Eastern Orthodox Church theologians would find representative of their position today. In fact, the development of this doctrine in the Eastern church cannot be considered parallel to that of the west. The Irenaean theodicy "was not carried at that time beyond these relatively inchoate beginnings, for the Eastern church, centring [sic] on Constantinople, did not continue to develop theologically as did the Roman Church in the West." Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 217. Hick further points out, however, that the more optimistic concept of the "image" of God, as seen in Irenaeus' thought, has "continued to operate in the minds of theologians of the Orthodox Church down to the present day." Cf. Hick's bibliography of contemporary Orthodox theologians, *ibid.*, pp. 217-218. Hick concludes this discussion (p. 218): "It cannot, however, be said that there is an 'Eastern Orthodox theodicy' which is Irenaean as distinct from Augustinian. Although, as we have seen, there are the foundations for a theodicy in the work of the early Hellenistic Fathers, Orthodox thought has never built systematically upon these foundations, and indeed has always taken very seriously the quite different theme of the pre-mundane fall of the angels and their activity in resisting God and tempting mankind." Hick contends that this Irenaean legacy lies dormant until Schleiermacher picks it up in the nineteenth century. This is not to suggest that Schleiermacher was drawing on Irenaeus, however, and Hick is not suggesting that the great German theologian is building on a tradition—rather he is only related by way of a "type" of theodicy. See *ibid.*, pp. 219ff.

³Heick underscores the Apologists' rejection of Stoic fatalism in their anthropology in favor of the notion that man is free to develop, through struggles with evil, to a final achievement of union with God. Otto W. Heick, A History of Christian Thought, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 1:62. Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 166.

The Apologists taught that man is free and able to make good or bad decisions; that as he learns to make right choices he will conquer the lower nature and triumph over the forces of evil.¹ For them sin was corruption, evil desire, captivity to the power of death, error and ignorance,² but guilt was not considered apart from personal sin.

This emphasis was due largely to two factors: (1) their optimism regarding man's freedom of will, and (2) their Logos-doctrine which stressed the importance of enlightenment as the answer to the ignorance caused by sin.³ Such a view transfers sin to an intellectual dimension and renders man morally perfectible because his connection with Adam was merely physical, having nothing to do with the will per se. Children are born innocent and suffer only the physical corruption of the sinful race in general.

Aristides (c.138-147) wrote of children dying "without sin," but failed to blame Adam for their death.⁴ Theophilus (c.180) held that man was created with a "middle nature" which was neither mortal nor immortal but capable of development either way.⁵ Through the wrong use of the will

¹Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:109-110. In defending the Christian religion the Apologists took the charges as they came; to produce dogmatics in the traditional sense of the term was not their primary intention.

²Häggglund, History of Theology, p. 18.

³Ibid., p. 29.

⁴The Apology of Aristides (Syriac) 15 (ANF, 9:277-278): "When a child has been born to one of them [the Christians], they give thanks to God; and if moreover it happens to die in childhood, they give thanks to God the more, as for one who has passed through the world without sins."

⁵To Autolyceus 2:24 (ANF, 2:104): "For man had been made a middle nature, neither wholly mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either." See also *ibid.*, 2:27 (ANF, 2:105): "But some one will say to us, Was man made by nature mortal? Certainly not. Was he, then, immortal? Neither do we affirm this. But one will say, Was he, then, nothing? Not even this hits the mark. He was by nature neither mortal nor immortal. For if He had made him immortal from him mortal, God would seem to be the cause of his death. Neither, then, immortal nor yet mortal did He make

had become afflicted by sin and suffers mortality because he did not obey. For Theophilus, decision entails consequences—man is responsible, and since this principle would hold true for free will as well, man lives by obeying God.¹ The theme does not grow into much more than a moralism, and man's loss of what theology would later call the dona supernaturalia is not linked to Adam's guilt but explains the physical woes of mankind and the expulsion of man from Paradise.²

The same theme of man's immaturity is found in the writings of Tatian the Syrian (c. 167), who developed a more detailed concept of man's Fall and the consequences attached to it in the setting of his understanding of the soul. Attached to the Spirit, or in union with the Spirit, the soul can become immortal, but when man sinned, the union was broken and so the opposite occurred.³ Tatian blamed man for his own depravity but saw the

him, but, as we have said above [2:24], capable of both; so that if he should incline to the things of immortality, keeping the commandment of God, he should receive as reward from Him immortality, and should become God; but, if, on the other hand, he should turn to the things of death, disobeying God, he should himself be the cause of death to himself. For God made man free, and with power over himself. That, then, which man brought upon himself through carelessness and disobedience, this God now vouchsafes to him as a gift through His own philanthropy and pity, when men obey Him. For as man, disobeying, drew death upon himself; so, obeying the will of God, he who desires is able to procure for himself life everlasting. For God has given us a law and holy commandments; and every one who keep these can be saved, and, obtaining the resurrection, can inherit incorruption."

¹Ibid., 2:27 (ANF, 2:105).

²See Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 168.

³To the Greeks 13 (ANF, 2:70): "The soul is not in itself immortal, O Greeks, but mortal. Yet it is possible for it not to die. If, indeed, it knows not the truth, it dies, and is dissolved with the body, but rises again at last at the end of the world with the body, receiving death by punishment in immortality. . . . The Logos, in truth, is the light of God, but the ignorant soul is darkness. On this account, if it continues solitary, it tends downward towards matter, and dies with the flesh; but, if it enters into union with the Divine Spirit, it is no longer helpless, but ascends to the regions whither the Spirit guides it: for the dwelling-place of the spirit is above, but the origin of the soul is from beneath. Now, in the beginning,

definite role of fallen angels in the origin of sin.¹

To Justin Martyr (c.100-165), Tatian's mentor, sin originated with the demons who subsequently brought the race under subjugation.² Sin is ignorance, or misguided faith, and it is universal.³ Man is free, and it is by his wrong use of freedom that sin has spread. Sin can increase to the point that one's inclinations to do right are lost—an occurrence aided by the activity of evil spirits or even bad education.⁴ Baptism brings illumination within and is connected with repentance and the new birth.⁵

While Justin appears to have a grasp of race-solidarity, he attempts no connection of Adam's guilt to Adam's posterity. Tennant observes that all

the spirit was a constant companion of the soul, but the soul forsook it because it was not willing to follow."

¹Ibid. 7-10.

²1 Apology 43; 2 Apology 5,7; Dialogue with Trypho 45.

³Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 166: For Justin, "sin on his view consists in 'erroneous belief and ignorance of what is good' (ψευδοδοξία καὶ ἄγνοια τῶν καλῶν), and in the resultant rebellion against God's commandments." Cf. 2 Apology 14.

⁴Dialogue with Trypho 93. Justin's view of the Fall is really only a glance at it. He does not develop any doctrine of original or inherited guilt. Man becomes guilty by following Adam's bad example, therefore Adam is a type of sin rather than the fount of it. As Kelly has explained, "the sin of Adam and Eve, consisting as it did in their yielding to the Devil's blandishments, is the prototype of our sin." Early Christian Doctrines, p. 167. This is clearly reflected in Justin's Dialogue with Trypho (ANF, 1:243): "Now, we know that he [Christ] did not go to the river because He stood in need of baptism, or of the descent of the Spirit like a dove; even as He submitted to be born and to be crucified, not because He needed such things, but because of the human race, which from Adam had fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent, and each one of which had committed personal transgression. For God, wishing both angels and men, who were endowed with free will, and at their own disposal, to do whatever He had strengthened each to do, made them so, that if they chose the things acceptable to Himself, He would keep them free from death and from punishment; but that if they did evil, He would punish each as He sees fit."

⁵1 Apology 61.

men, according to Justin, fall by their own guilt because they have acted like Adam and Eve: "It is not that he deliberately adopted this view rather than its alternative; he had simply not worked out a solution of the problem."¹ In the light of this view of the Fall Justin concluded that the purpose of the Incarnation was to bestow enlightenment, i.e., its purpose was didactic in nature.²

In summary, the Apologists' stress on freedom of the will and moral perfectibility failed to perceive a natural depravity in mankind.³ While accepting the solidarity of the human race the writers of this period saw

¹Sources of Original Sin, p. 277. Tennant also quotes from a passage ascribed to Justin: "Man having been thus made, and immediately looking towards transgression, naturally became subject to corruption. Corruption then becoming inherent in nature, it was necessary that He who wished to save should be one who destroyed the efficient cause of corruption." This corruption is taken to mean mortality. So Adam brought death, but not guilt, to mankind.

²Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 168-169: "As 'the new law-giver,' or again, 'the eternal, final law, the faithful covenant which replaces all laws and commandments,' Christ imparts this saving knowledge." Kelly further attributes this redemption-as-enlightenment notion to a foundation in the Logos doctrine of Justin. This doctrine in no way dissipates the force of the early Christian moralistic tone in the writings of Justin and while he can talk about the curse of sin being over all the race (Dialogue with Trypho 95) he can be very optimistic about man's will and future. Tennant observes that what Justin has actually done is to repeat the doctrine of the rabbis in his treatment of sin. See Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin." Cf. Dialogue with Trypho 11, 18, 41, 43.

³It seems evident that not much progress toward the Augustinian doctrine of original sin was made during the period of the early church through the Apologists. In fact, Williams has observed that "it would seem true to say that (with the exception of the doubtful allusion [in Barnabas 12] . . .) no trace is found of the Adamic Fall-theory in what survives of Christian literature written between the Epistle to the Romans and the works of Justin Martyr." Ideas of the Fall, p. 172. Williams himself has built his examination around the "Adam-theory" of the Fall. But he has recognized two other common theories which "lost-out" in early Christianity: (1) the Watcher-theory, or angel-theory, and (2) the "evil-imagination" theory of the rabbis. Because of the lack of unified agreement on the Adam-theory of Paul during this period, remnants or parts of these other theories are continually discernable. See *ibid.*, pp. 31-34ff.

only a physical consequence for Adam's posterity, i.e., death.¹ They developed no theology that showed the results of Adam's Fall on the will beyond the influence of the physical effects on man's intellect.² Infants were not viewed as guilty of sin and man was considered responsible solely for his own resistive actions against God.

Irenaeus

The optimistic theology of the early Christians found fuller development in the theology of Irenaeus (c.135-c.202), Bishop of Lyons, who is commonly held to be the first constructive, systematic theologian of the church, and the first Christian thought leader to wrestle with the issues of theodicy in his endeavor to offer alternative solutions to the Gnostic explanations of evil.³ In his combat against Gnostic dualism Irenaeus

¹A word about Athenagoras seems appropriate here. Athenagoras (c.177) explains the Fall in terms of angelic lust (based on Gen 6:14): "These latter angels fell into lusting after virgins and became slaves of the flesh, while the prince of matter became negligent and wicked in managing what was entrusted to him. From those who had intercourse with the virgins were begotten the so-called giants. . . . Those angels, then, which fell from the heavens, haunt the air and the earth and are no longer able to rise to heavenly things. Along with the souls of the giants, they are the demons which wander about the world. . . . The prince of matter, moreover, as is clear from what happened, rules and governs in opposition to the goodness of God." Athenagoras, A Plea Regarding Christians 24-25 (LCC, 1:327).

²The Apologists' subject matter can be systematized but these early writers did not produce systematic theologies. One must glean their thoughts and reconstruct their world of thought. Heick has judged: "In passing critical judgment upon the Apologists, it must be remembered that every practical apologetic proof forced them to accommodate themselves to the language of their opponents. In contrast to Harnack, the theology of the Apologists is philosophical in form, but there is a great wealth of genuine New Testament piety back of their philosophical terminology. The method, however, becomes dangerous. In the course of time, language will inevitably affect the content of its message. In this respect the Apologists set a bad example for succeeding generations." Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:65.

³Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 283. Cf. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 211, and Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 19. In general these

developed a Christocentric theology molded by the New Testament canon.¹

Irenaeus sought to give a Christian meaning to history in which he saw a literal devil in combat with God.² Man, exercising his native free will, disobeyed God and forfeited the "image" he was to develop and thus became a servant of the devil. In this setting salvation derives its meaning. God, in his great pity and compassion cursed the devil and the ground (but not man) and made possible the completion of his purpose for man.³ It was God's original purpose that man should grow into his image, but

authors agree that the importance of Irenaeus to early Christian thought cannot be overemphasized. Irenaeus is not always consistent in this constructive task. See Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, pp. 284-285, for a list of some of his inconsistencies. Hick classifies an entire theodicy type after Irenaeus which he places in contrast to the Augustinian tradition (Hick, Evil and the God of Love, pp. 201-240). Gonzalez sees him as "one of the greatest theologians of all times." A History of Christian Thought, 1:173. Moxon sees him as a father that both the west and the east can appeal to. Doctrine of Sin, pp. 19-20.

¹Daniélou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, pp. 166ff. and 398ff. Gonzalez writes, "His theology, grounded in the Bible and the doctrine of the church rather than on his personal opinion, has repeatedly been a source of theological renewal." History of Christian Thought, 1:173. Heick further points out that Irenaeus is filled with the spirit and thoughts of Paul more than any other of the leading theologians of his age. He was thoroughly Christocentric as opposed to the previous logos-centeredness of the Apologists. See History of Christian Thought, 1:108.

²Against Heresies 4.40.3 (ANF, 1:524): "We learn that this was the apostate angel and the enemy, because he was envious of God's workmanship, and took in hand to render this (workmanship) an enmity with God. For this cause also God has banished from His presence him who did of his own accord stealthily sow the tares, that is, him who brought about the transgression; but He took compassion upon him, who, through want of care no doubt, but still wickedly (on the part of another), became involved in disobedience; and He turned the enmity by which (the devil) had designed to make (man) the enemy of God, against the author of it, by removing His own anger from man, turning it in another direction, and sending it instead upon the serpent."

³Ibid. 3.23.3 (ANF, 1:456): "Immediately after Adam had transgressed, as the Scripture relates, He (God) pronounced no curse against Adam personally, but against the ground, in reference to his works, as a certain person among the ancients has observed: 'God did indeed transfer the curse to the earth, that it might not remain in man.'"

the growth process was interrupted by the Fall of Adam.¹ This notion presupposed that man was not created perfect in the sense of maturity, but that he was designed to grow into that perfection, i.e., perfection was a progressive destination not an original endowment.²

With the Fall viewed as an interruption in man's development,³ salvation took on the nature of restoring that development, and thus the atoning work of Christ involved a broader connotation than simply the cross could demonstrate.⁴ Christ became a Savior from sin's power as well as penalty. Irenaeus' emphasis was on death and life as the arenas in which sin has demonstrated its damage. Salvation is the recovery to health and

¹Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought 1:167: "One should note here that this understanding of the Fall as an interruption in man's development is very different from what later became common in Western theology. According to Irenaeus, the Fall is not so much the loss of certain perfections that man had as the interruption of what ought to have been his growth."

²Irenaeus wrote: "Created things must be inferior to Him who created them, from the very fact of their later origin; for it was not possible for things recently created to have been uncreated. But inasmuch as they are not uncreated, for this very reason do they come short of the perfect. Because, as these things are of later date, so are they infantile; so are they unaccustomed to, and unexercised in, perfect discipline. For as it certainly is in the power of a mother to give strong food to her infant (but she does not do so), as the child is not yet able to receive more substantial nourishment; so also it was possible for God Himself to have made man perfect from the first, but man could not receive this (perfection), being as yet an infant." Against Heresies 4.38.1 (ANF, 1:521). Here one sees Irenaeus following the same line of thought as Theophilus with his middle nature theory.

³Harnack emphasizes what he calls a "teleological significance" in Irenaeus' view of the Fall, suggesting that in some way Irenaeus saw man's disobedience as conducive to man's development, and therefore of educational value to lead man to the perfection God had intended. See Adolf Harnack, History of Dogma, 7 vols., trans. from the 3d German ed., by Neil Buchanan, (New York: Dover Publications, 1961), 2:270-271. Tennant questions this analysis. See Sources of Original Sin, p. 287.

⁴Moxon sees little trace of any propitiation or ransom notions in Irenaeus. Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, pp. 21-22.

wholeness.¹ God, in "gentle pity," cast man out of the garden to prevent him from partaking of the tree of life and thus sustaining, eternally, the halted development.²

Irenaeus made a distinction between "image" (εἰκὼν) and "likeness" (ὁμοίωσις), the former referring to man's flesh or body, the latter to his spiritual unity of soul gradually developed through the action of "the Spirit" (πνεῦμα) which existed only in germ form in Adam.³ What happened to retard the growth process toward perfection was a loss of the Spirit not the loss of reason or freedom.⁴ The development of the ὁμοίωσις was

¹Häggglund, History of Theology, p. 56.

²Ibid., 3.23.5-6 (ANF, 1:457): "God detested him who had led man astray, but by degrees, and little by little, He showed compassion to him who had been beguiled. Wherefore also He drove him out of Paradise, and removed him far from the tree of life, not because He envied him the tree of life, as some venture to assert, but because He pitied him, (and did not desire) that he should continue a sinner for ever, nor that the sin which surrounded him should be immortal, an evil interminable and irremediable. But He set a bound to his (state of) sin, by interposing death, and thus causing sin to cease, putting an end to it by the dissolution of the flesh, which should take place in the earth, so that man, ceasing at length to live to sin, and dying to it, might begin to live to God."

³Ibid. 5.6.1 (quoted in Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 211: "If the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed of an animal nature, and being left carnal, shall be imperfect being, possessing indeed the image (of God) in his formation, but not receiving the likeness through the Spirit." Hick contemporizes Irenaeus thus: "Man's basic nature, in distinction from the other animals, is that of a personal being endowed with moral freedom and responsibility. This is the divine in him; he is made as person in the image of God. But man, the finite personal creature capable of personal relationship with his Maker, is as yet only potentially the perfected being whom God is seeking to produce. He is only at the beginning of a process of growth and development in God's continuing providence, which is to culminate in the finite 'likeness' of God. Thus whilst the image of God is man's nature as personal, the divine likeness will be a quality of personal existence which reflects finitely the life of the Creator Himself" (ibid., pp. 211-212). It should be remembered that Irenaeus is not always consistent in his treatment of this distinction and what is important for this study is that he sees the Fall as an interruption in the growth process.

⁴Against Heresies 5.27.2. See also Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 286.

retarded through the Fall.¹ Thus Adam, innocent (though not virtuous) at his creation, was in progress to a destination of perfection. But he fell and by the mystical principle of racial solidarity (Rom 5) the whole of mankind was involved with him.² For Adam's progeny the power of sin was to be found seated in man's will, not his flesh.³

This notion of the Fall dictated what kind of work was required of Christ to save man. Going through the steps of man, over the ground he tread, Christ must be victorious where Adam had fallen *and then pass* through each phase of man's spiritual growth process. This is Irenaeus' recapitulation doctrine, deriving its name originally from Eph 1:10 (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις, lit. "to head up," "to sum up") connoting restoration.

It was for this reason that the Son of God, although He was perfect, passed through the state of infancy in common with the rest of mankind, partaking of it thus not for his own benefit, but for that of the infantile stage of man's existence in order that man might be able to receive Him.^{4,5}

¹The development of the ὁμοίωσις is retarded through the Fall (this notion laid the foundation for the later Catholic distinction between pura naturalia and donum supernaturale or "original righteousness"). Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 1:94.

²Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, pp. 288-289. Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 171-172; Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 196; and Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 22.

³Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin," by F. R. Tennant.

⁴Against Heresies 4.38.2 (ANF, 1:521). Cf. *ibid.*, 2.22.4.

⁵Tennant sees some tension of thought here since the recapitulation doctrine suggests that man was mature, or possessed a likeness and image of God, whereas the middle-nature theory of Theophilus did not allow this. If man was to be "restored" he could not have originally been completely "infantile." Irenaeus either preserves this tension or overlooks it and moves between the view of former theologians. See Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 288. Moxon emphasizes the incompatible nature of Irenaeus' two lines of thought which make him a father to whom both the east and the west would appeal. Doctrine of Sin, pp. 19-20.

In Irenaeus' thought Christ became what we are that he might make us what he is,¹ and as a man Christ is what Adam should have been had he not sinned.²

In spite of his Adam-Christ typology and his keen grasp of Christocentric soteriology, Irenaeus developed no conception of inherited sin in terms of sharing Adam's guilt. The entire human race suffers, but only physical consequences, e.g., expulsion from the garden, prohibition of the tree of life, interruption of the spiritual fellowship. Nothing specific is said about sharing in Adam's culpability, although there are statements which leave the implications for a later theological development.³

¹Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Irenaeus, St," by R. P. C. Hanson.

²Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 1:168. This concept presupposes the Pauline principle of solidarity so evident in Rom 5:12-21. Irenaeus writes, "For as by one man's disobedience sin entered, and death obtained (a place) through sin; so also by the obedience of one man, righteousness having been introduced, shall cause life to fructify in those persons who in times past were dead." Against Heresies 3.21.10 (ANF, 1:454). Daniélou has interpreted Irenaeus as follows: "Adam is here not a type of Christ, but a figure of contrast; Christ is seen as head of the new race, as Adam had been head of the old . . . Thus, redemption is the cause of the incarnation, but incarnation is the condition of redemption." Daniélou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, pp. 178-179.

³To the post-Augustinian mind Irenaeus' statements may occasionally sound Augustinian. The following statements are from his work, Against Heresies: "By this action the prophet pointed out the sure word of God, which we had negligently lost by means of a tree, and were not in the way of finding again, we should receive anew by the dispensation of a tree, (viz., the cross of Christ)." (5.17.3, ANF, 1:545). "Inasmuch as it was by these things that we disobeyed God, and did not give credit to His word, so was it also by these same that he brought in obedience and consent as respects His Word; by which things He clearly shows forth God Himself, whom indeed we had offended in the first Adam, when he did not perform His commandment. In the second Adam, however, we are reconciled, being made obedient even unto death. For we were debtors to none other but to Him whose commandment we had transgressed at the beginning." (5.16.3, ANF, 1:544). "In Adam disobedient man was stricken" (5.34.2, quoted in Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 172). "For it behooved Him who was to destroy sin, and redeem man under the power of death, that He should Himself be made that very same thing which he was, that is, man; who had been drawn by sin into bondage, but was held by death, so that sin should

By way of reflective evaluation one could say that while there could be seen in Irenaeus the potentiality for a later doctrine of original guilt, it is clearly undeveloped by him. Perhaps this helps to explain why he did not take more serious offense to Adam's sin but simply viewed it as excusable.¹ His somewhat sentimental emphasis on God's compassion, to the neglect of God's wrath, gives his theology an Eastern flavor that would not characterize Augustine. And yet, as Williams has asserted, it seems inevitable that his doctrine tended to goad development in that it could maintain itself only

in a mind which has not the time or is unwilling to probe very deeply into the problem. If it is seriously reflected upon, it must either relapse into meaninglessness or transform itself into the theory of 'Seminal Identity,' according to which Adam represented humanity precisely because, at the time of his Fall, he was humanity.²

be destroyed by man, and man should go forth from death. For as by the disobedience of the one man who was originally moulded from virgin soil, the many were made sinners, and forfeited life; so was it necessary that, by the obedience of one man, who was originally born from a virgin, many should be justified and receive salvation. Thus, then, was the Word of God made man . . . God recapitulated in Himself the ancient formation of man, that He might kill sin, deprive death of its power, and vivify man." (3.18.7, ANF, 1:448). These statements are to be understood in the context of Irenaeus' recapitulation doctrine. In each instance the emphasis is on the fact of Christ's restoration, not the extent of Adam's loss. The solidarity between Adam and his progeny is a mystical one rather than a real one for Irenaeus. In such a notion Irenaeus makes no real advance on the doctrine of Paul, who also emphasized the Fall as a collective deed of the race, since no explicit theory or explanation is set forth to show how this comes about. Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 171-172, where several statements of the same type quoted above are collected. Kelly concludes that "Irenaeus nowhere formulates a specific account of the connexion between Adam's guilty act and the rest of mankind." Moxon would agree: "The method whereby sin is produced in mankind as a result of Adam's transgression is left entirely undefined." Doctrine of Sin, p. 23.

¹Daniélou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, p. 406.

²Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 196-197.

Clement and Origen

The two Alexandrian theologians, Clement (c.155-c.220) and his brilliant student Origen (c.185-c.254), represent a kind of thought which appears to have little connection with that of Irenaeus or Paul, though some parallels can be drawn.¹

In common with other early fathers Clement held that man is free² and that Adam was created immature.³ This optimistic view of present man militates against his seeing the deeper nature of sin that the west would perceive and what Clement essentially deals with is actual sin.⁴ Sin began in man's using his sexual capabilities before God had intended him to.⁵ Sin and death came as the result of man's sin. Yet Clement never developed this theme enough to bring him beyond the understanding of the Greek Apologists on this. Man is not under the curse of Adam's sin at birth, thus there is no need for infant baptism for Clement in this connection

¹In some respects these theologians were precursors of later eastern Christian thought on this subject (particularly that centered in Antioch), and even of Pelagius. See Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 294.

²Stromateis 7.2.6 (LCC, 2:96): "The Lord of all, whether Greek or barbarian, uses persuasion to those who are willing; for it is not his way to compel one who is able of himself to obtain salvation by the exercise of free choice and by fulfilling all that is required on his part so as to lay hold of the hope."

³Ibid. 6.11-12 (quoted in Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 216): "He was not perfect in his creation, but adapted to the reception of virtue."

⁴See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 208.

⁵Clement does not depreciate sexual expression but assigns the first human sin to the prematurity of its expression. In Stromateis 3.44.94 (LCC, 2:847), he writes, "The Saviour came to men who were astray in their thoughts, to us whose minds were corrupted as a result of our disobeying the commandments because we were lovers of pleasure, and perhaps also because the first man of our race did not bide his time, desired the favor of marriage before the proper hour, and fell into sin by not waiting for the time of God's will; 'for every one who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her.'"

and all baptism deals with are sins of a voluntary nature.¹

For Clement, Adam is not the head of mankind in a hereditary sense but rather constitutes a type of every man and, consequently, Adam's sin is a type of every man's sin.² Absent from his thought is that mystical solidarity with Adam so prominent in the theology of Irenaeus so that, as a result, all become sinners by their own wrong use of the will with no connection to Adam. Sin is caused by the "random impulses of ignorance and the irrational forces to which we fall victims from our incapacity to learn,"³ therefore sin is a responsible act of man which finds its model in Adam's sin but carries with it no hereditary guilt from Adam.⁴

In short, Clement denied the concept of inherited guilt⁵ and even though he taught a doctrine of the Fall he did not really go past the scanty hamartiological treatments of the Apologists.

¹Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 294.

²Ibid.

³Stromateis 7.3.16 (LCC, 2:102).

⁴LaRondelle has analyzed the connection between Clement's perfectionism and his doctrine of sin: "Clement's Platonic-Christian idea of perfection, which anticipates even the apocalyptic-eschatological perfection of the New Testament (the 'angelic' perfection of Lk. 20, 36), is determined by an intellectualistic concept of sin as act rather than power. In other words, his doctrine of sinlessness or Neoplatonic perfectionism is based upon a basic denial of original sin. 'Salvation is effected through both well-doing and knowledge, of both of which the Lord is the teacher.'" Hans K. LaRondelle, Perfection and Perfectionism, 2d. ed. (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1975), p. 298.

⁵Stromateis 3.16.100 (LCC, 2:87): "Let them tell us how the newly born child could commit fornication, or how that which has done nothing has fallen under the curse of Adam. The only consistent answer for them, it seems, is to say that birth is an evil, not only for the body, but for the soul for the sake of which the body itself exists. And when David says, 'In sin I was born and in unrighteousness my mother conceived me,' he says in prophetic manner that Eve is his mother. For 'Eve became the mother of the living.' But if he was conceived in sin, yet he was not himself in sin, nor is he himself sin." Cf. ibid. 3.9.64. Tennant suggests that Clement unconsciously anticipates an attitude that would later become unorthodox in this regard. Sources of Original Sin, p. 296.

Origen's notion of man is not consistent and appears to have varied with certain Christian customs such as infant baptism.¹ His cosmology, inspired by Plato's Phaedrus myth, was formulated to explain the origin of evil in such a way that Gnostic dualism would be rejected while at the same time allowing for God to remain just and worshipable by placing all blame for sin on the shoulders of man.² Cosmologically man is the victim of a pre-mundane Fall which is, more specifically, many individual falls.³ Those souls which fell are confined to flesh on this earth undergoing punishment and purgation.⁴ This concept is calculated to remove sin's blame from God—man is responsible for his state due to his misuse of the will in the pre-existent world.⁵

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 219ff.

²In Against Celsus 4.66 (cf. 6.54-56), Origen affirms that evil proceeds from man's natural soul and manifests itself in evil acts. Dualism is obviously unacceptable to Christian monotheism and thus Origen attempts to produce a theodicy that would preserve the integrity of the Christian God while at the same time explaining the presence of evil. Daniélou asserts that the introduction of ideas derived from Platonist ontology, "incompatible with the Christian revelation," had a "seriously distorting effect on Christian tradition." Daniélou, Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture, pp. 415-416.

³Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 216.

⁴Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 181. Origen does not hold that flesh is intrinsically evil.

⁵Ibid., pp. 180-182. These souls are involved in sin on earth, indeed they enter earth-existence in sin. Kelly argues, "The theory entails, of course, the abandonment of any doctrine of corporate sinfulness, for it suggests that if human beings are sinful from birth, their wickedness is the legacy of their own misguided choices in the transcendental world, and has nothing to do with the disobedience of any one first man." The implications of Origen's view seem devastating to the Biblical record which sees a single pair disobeying a clear command of God. But Origen dismisses the problem by employing his allegorical hermeneutic in which the Fall-story is transformed into a nebulous myth about a pre-temporal disordering of man's souls and reduces Adam to a prototype of man not unlike the teaching of Clement. See Against Celsus 4.40 where Origen sees Adam as a symbol of corporate mankind and the expulsion from the garden as having hidden and mystical significance which excels even the thoughts of Plato's Phaedrus.

That all souls have sinned like Adam explains the universal sinfulness of man.¹ Only one soul did not fall, that of Jesus, who voluntarily took on flesh in order to offer aid to the wayward souls.² By a long process man can, in the appointed ascetic way, attain to Christian perfection which Origen viewed as deification of the soul.³

This theory had no room for genetic inheritance of sin through Adam. But upon his moving to Caesara and encountering infant baptism, Origen apparently was at least attracted by a more literal approach to the Biblical record of the Fall and depravity. In his Commentary on Romans Origen presents an anthropology of a less atomistic nature than that in his earlier On First Principles.⁴

¹See Commentary on Romans 5.1. Origen's suggestion of inherited sin should be understood in the light of the problem of sources explained below (ftnt. 4).

²On First Principles 2.6.5.

³LaRondelle, Perfection and Perfectionism, p. 300. Cf. Against Celsus 3.28.

⁴Commentators on Origen are divided in their understanding of his teaching because of the revisionary work of Rufinus (c.345-410), the Italian monk. The common interpretation has been that Origen attempts to justify the practice of infant baptism by way of a Pauline view of racial solidarity. Williams accepts the theory of Harnack which proposes that it was Origen's encounter with infant baptism at Caesarea that accounted for his more Pauline doctrine. See Harnack, History of Dogma, 2:365. Along with Moxon and Tennant, he takes the differences between early and later writings of Origen at face value and interprets them from a developmental standpoint. Williams has explained that infant baptism was a practice that started prior to the systematization of the doctrine of original sin and that Origen reasoned to human sinfulness from the rite itself. He further asserts that "the close study of the Epistle to the Romans . . . had the effect of diverting his mind into more characteristically Pauline channels." See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 219-231. If this view is correct then Origen reverted to his previous cosmology when he wrote his last work, Against Celsus, for it is in that work that he allegorizes Adam (by way of the play on the Hebrew אדם). Ibid., p. 229. In the light of more recent discoveries of Origen's works in Greek (see Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v., "Origen," and "Rufinus"), Kelly's challenge of this view seems more tenable—Origen's theory of pre-cosmic Fall "entails, of course, the abandonment of any doctrine of corporate sinfulness, for it suggests that

Origen is significant to this study in that he argues for infant baptism on the basis of pollution,¹ and he is apparently the first theologian to apply the statement of Heb 7:10 "in his loins" to the posterity of Adam in connection with racial unity.² But to place him in a line to Augustine would be questionable since his Pauline-sounding material is debated in the light of his Platonic cosmology.

The Neo-Alexandrian School

In the recounting of doctrinal development in Christianity it is apparent that the church in the west faced different stresses and controversies than that in the east. The Eastern church, torn as it was by the Trinitarian and Christological debates did not have the input into the doctrine of sin that the Western church had. The history of theology tends to be the record of reaction and response and in view of that fact one should not be surprised to find doctrine developing differently in mode, terminology, and rate of speed in relation to the interests of the church in given locations.

if human beings are sinful from birth, their wickedness is the legacy of their own misguided choices in the transcendental world, and has nothing to do with the disobedience of any one first man. Interpreters of Origen have sometimes been reluctant to admit that this was his true teaching." Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 181. And again, Kelly suggests, "there are passages in his writings especially in his Commentary on Romans, where he appears to accept the doctrine that the whole race was present in Adam's loins and 'sinned in him.' It is difficult, however, to take them at their face value, for we know that in his translation Rufinus adjusted his teaching in the interests of orthodoxy." Ibid. Cf. Brunner, Creation and Redemption, p. 114; Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, pp. 79-80; and Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, pp. 303-306.

¹In his work On St. Luke 14, Origen explains that infants are baptized for forgiveness of sin and maintains that none are free of pollution. For this reason, he writes, infants are baptized that their pollution may be removed.

²Commentary on Romans 5.4.

Eastern Christianity had a tendency to be more mystical and philosophical, due largely to the influence of the Platonism, Neo-Platonism, and allegorism of Alexandrian theology. By comparison the west was more pragmatic or practical. This is observed in greater fulness as the study proceeds, particularly in the contrast between the literalism of Tertullian and the mysticism of Irenaeus, or the pragmatism of Cyprian and the highly speculative allegorism of Origen.

This section and the next are somewhat transitional since after Irenaeus there was little additional definiteness in the east with regard to the doctrine of sin. Hence the study of original sin during this period becomes a search for inferences. Several rather significant individuals contributed to the theology and life of the church in the east but were relatively minor in their treatment of sin and grace. For the sake of clarity this period is divided into two schools of thought: (1) the neo-Alexandrian school and (2) the Antiochene school. Observation in this section is limited to the Neo-Alexandrians Methodius, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, and the Cappadocian Fathers (Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa). These theologians shared the common belief that man is free and responsible for the entrance and continuation of sin. They wrote from a recapitulationist perspective and generally held to the middle-nature theory of man.

Methodius of Olympus (d. c.311) is the only Eastern figure between Origen and Athanasius who contributes significantly to the notion of sin. He was an extreme critic of Origen's philosophical framework (although he was not unaffected by philosophy himself), especially his cosmology.¹ He opposed the pre-mundane Fall and the Origenic allegorism. He also revived

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 250.

Irenaeus' recapitulation theory in a more extreme sense which identified Adam with the human race in a closer bond than earlier fathers had, but in no less ambiguous a fashion.¹ According to Williams, Methodius was the first to use the technical term "Fall"² in describing Adam's transgression, a term which would later carry connotations for a developing theology of original righteousness.³ However, he did not teach original righteousness in the classical sense and meant the term "Fall" simply to convey the notion of "calamity."⁴

Methodius' view of Adam's original state is much in line with that of the Greek Apologists and Irenaeus, namely, that Adam was created immature and childlike.⁵ He held an idea of inherited weakness (φθορά)

¹Ibid., p. 251.

²Ibid., pp. 252-253: "We notice what appears to be the first instance, in any Christian writing which can be regarded as a systematic discussion of the subject of the application of the significant term 'Fall' (πτώμα) to the sin of Adam. This term is entirely non-scriptural in this connexion, the word used by St. Paul being παράβασις, a 'stepping aside' from the path marked out by God; and it was destined later to have momentous consequences in the way of fostering a belief in 'original righteousness,' inasmuch as the conception of a 'Fall' implies an exalted condition previously enjoyed by the being who 'fell,' an implication from which the Biblical and early Patristic word παράβασις is entirely free." Williams does point out, however, that the technical use of the term "Fall" was not developed at this time and that too much should not be read into Methodius' use of it.

³In Catholic doctrine this term (justitia originalis) refers to the exaggerated accounts of the original state of man's perfect rectitude. According to this notion man was originally endowed with supernatural gifts in addition to his created and essential nature. When Adam fell these gifts were removed. See Harvey, Handbook of Theological Terms, p. 171, and Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Original Righteousness," by William Hordern.

⁴Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 253.

⁵Methodius did insist that Adam was immortal and thus lost immortality through his sin. See ibid., p. 251, and Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 183.

through Adam which was vague and would be picked up later by Athanasius,¹ but he preserved the freedom of man's will.²

The Christocentric theology of Athanasius (c.296-373), Bishop of Alexandria, provides a further development in the Eastern view of sin from a soteriological standpoint. God created man with a gift of grace—"He gave us freely, by the Grace of the Word, a life in correspondence with God,"³ i.e., "after his own image" (εὐκλόω).⁴

In light of this concept of creation Athanasius forms his doctrine of the Fall.⁵ When man fell he was thrust into a "natural condition," that

¹Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 310: "'When man had disobeyed,' he writes, 'sin established its seat in him. Deprived of the divine breath, we have since that time been at the mercy of the passions which the serpent put in us.'"

²Again, this was in keeping with earlier Christian writers. Kelly makes this relation: "His teaching thus reverts to the pre-Origenic tradition, being marked by the optimistic colouring which was usually characteristic of Greek thought on the subject. This comes out both in the way he softens the Pauline antithesis (cf. Rom 7, 9-25) between carnal desire and the spirit, and also in the way in which he combines strong emphasis on man's free will, apparently unimpeded by the effect of the Fall, with the affirmation that human nature inherits a bias towards sensuality from Adam." Early Christian Doctrines, p. 183.

³On the Incarnation 5 (NPNF, 4:38).

⁴Ibid. 3 (NPNF, 4:37-38): "And among these, having taken especial pity, above all things on earth, upon the race of men, and having perceived its inability, by virtue of the condition of its origin, to continue in one stay, He gave them a further gift, and He did not barely create man, as He did all the irrational creatures on the earth, but made them after His own image, giving them a portion even of the power of His own Word; so that having as it were a kind of reflexion of the Word, and being made rational, they might be able to abide even in blessedness, living the true life which belongs to the saints in paradise." Free will was bestowed, and because of God's "knowing once more how the will of man could sway to either side, in anticipation He secured the grace given them by a law and by the spot where He placed them."

⁵While Athanasius undoubtedly did not teach "original righteousness," at least not in a mature form, it is a fact that the elements of a later donum superadditum doctrine could find roots present. Moxon insists that Athanasius did not hold the doctrine of Original Righteousness in that man still had the potential for growth (Doctrine of Sin, p. 32), but it

of φθορά (disintegration), which meant he gradually lost the special gifts of grace.¹ The Fall caused the lapse into the natural state and redemption became the work of reuniting the soul with the Logos so as to arrest the "disintegration" of man. This process is called "deification" (θεοποίησις).² Man is perfectible, despite his fallen state, through the deifying work of Christ.³

Man's lapse is attributable ultimately to Adam but not in the sense of Adam's first sin. Athanasius held that man gradually falls further in

is a well-attested opinion that here one can find the doctrine in an elemental or embryonic form. See Williams, Ideas of the Fall; p. 258, and Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 346.

¹On the Incarnation 4 (NPNF, 4:38): "For if, out of a former normal state of non-existence, they were called into being by the Presence and loving-kindness of the Word, it followed naturally that when men were bereft of the knowledge of God and were turned back to what was not (for what is evil is not, but what is good is), they should, since they derive their being from God who IS, be everlastingly bereft even of being; in other words, that they should be disintegrated and abide in death and corruption. For man is by nature mortal, inasmuch as he is made out of what is not; but by reason of his likeness to Him that is (and if he still preserved this likeness by keeping Him in his knowledge) he would stay his natural corruption, and remain incorrupt; . . . but being incorrupt, he would live henceforth as God, to which I suppose the divine Scripture refers, when it says: 'I have said ye are souls [Ps 82:6]. . . . but ye die like men, and fall as one of the princes.'" Man is clearly more than the child of Irenaean theology in that he is able to contemplate God, an advance in thought which Williams calls a "definite breach with Hellenic tradition." Ideas of the Fall, pp. 258-259. The presence of this embryonic doctrine of Original Righteousness thus defines the Fall not in terms of depravity but as a deprivation of gifts originally bestowed. See *ibid.*, p. 260.

²On the Incarnation 54 (NPNF, 4:65): "For He was made man that we might be made God; and He manifested Himself by a body that we might receive the idea of the unseen Father; and He endured the insolence of men that we might inherit immortality. For while He Himself was in no way injured, being impassible and incorruptible and very Word and God, men who were suffering, and for whose sakes He endured all this, He maintained and preserved in His own impassibility." Cf. Against the Arians 1.42 (NPNF, 4:330): "He deified what he put on, and more than that, 'gave' it graciously to the race of men." See further Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 1:300; and Hagglund, History of Theology, pp. 81-82.

³Athanasius argued for the necessity of Christ's divinity on this basis. Cf. Against the Arians 1.42.

disintegration, but he did not make it clear how Adam was involved specifically. He did, however, indicate that Adam caused his race to be "banished" from God's face, "lost," and placed in bondage.¹ But the inherited state is not one of guilt.

It is clear that with the introduction of a reinterpretation of the natural state there is a new development. Human nature includes the bodily and sensuous constitution, but at creation God gave to man the higher faculties of intellect and spirituality along with the gift of grace. While these were not totally lost through the deprivation caused by the Fall, they were impaired so as to require God to restore them from "disintegration into non-existence" through the deification process.

A lesser figure than Athanasius is his younger contemporary Cyril of Jerusalem (c.315-386) who makes a few incidental statements perhaps indicative of Eastern thinking in his locale. In two of his surviving catecheses, or addresses, he makes statements about the will of man and the Fall of Adam.

The soul, before it came into this world, had committed no sin, but having come in sinless, we now sin of our free-will. . . . The soul is self-governed, and though the devil can suggest, he has not the power to compel against the will. He pictures to thee the thought of fornication: if thou wilt, thou acceptest it; if thou wilt not, thou rejectest.²

Elsewhere Cyril refers to Adam's sin as a "very great . . . wound"

¹Tennant quotes Athanasius' Exposition on Psalm 15:8; Against the Arians 2.60; and On the Incarnation 20. See Sources of the Fall, p. 313.

²Catechetical Lectures 4.19, 21 (NPNF, 7:23-24). Cf. ibid. 2.4 (PNF, 7:9): "Through him [the devil] our forefather Adam was cast out for disobedience, and exchanged a Paradise bringing forth wondrous fruits of its own accord for the ground which bringeth forth thorns. What then? someone will say. We have been beguiled and are lost. Is there then no salvation left? We have fallen: is it not possible to rise again? We have been blinded: may we not recover our sight? We have become crippled: can we never walk upright? In a word, we are dead: May we not rise again?"

of our nature,¹ and writes that infants die for reasons other than penalty for their sin.² There is no inherited guilt.³

The three great Cappadocian fathers are better known for their successful efforts to establish the Nicene faith⁴ but they offer some insights for this study. The contribution of Basil (the Great), Bishop of Caesarea (c.329-379), the oldest and perhaps greatest of the three, is largely based on inferential statements regarding solidarity and transmission.⁵ Man was created with free will⁶ and evil is the deprivation of good.⁷ God cannot be held responsible for sin since it neither exists (metaphysically) nor is creatable by a good God.⁸ Rather it is attributable to man's free will.⁹

There is a hint at solidarity in Basil's use of the first person plural: "We" have drawn death, the tree was to test "our" obedience, the devil became "our" adversary, as a result of Adam's transgression.¹⁰ Redemption is restoration to what man lost by Adam's Fall: "The dispensation of God and Saviour concerning man is a recall from the fall, and a return

¹Ibid. 12.7 (NPNF 7:74).

²Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 35. Tennant has suggested that these are reactions to Origen and in that context they make sense, but whatever the case, Cyril gives no clear explanation of man's solidarity in Adam and clearly views sin as personal and freedom as impaired by sin. See Sources of Original Sin, p. 315.

³Ibid., p. 35. Cf. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 263.

⁴See Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 1:311.

⁵Tennant judges Basil's statements as "neither numerous nor important." Sources of Original Sin, p. 316.

⁶Homily 9.3.

⁷Ibid. 9.6.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid. 9.3, 5.

¹⁰Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 268.

from alienation caused by disobedience to close communion with God."¹ Basil used the word "transmitted" (παρέπεμφεν) in reference to Adam's sin² but suggested no theory of transmission.³

Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus (330-389) and close friend of Basil, did not produce a theological treatise on the subject of Adam's sin and its affect on his posterity, but his incidental statements tend to demonstrate a collage of Eastern tradition that had gathered since Irenaeus.

Like those before him in the east Gregory taught that man was born with free will.⁴ As with Tatian, Theophilus, and Irenaeus, he saw man created infantile with the capacity for growth.⁵ Through a wrong use of the will man thwarted that development.⁶ Like Methodius and Athanasius

¹On the Holy Spirit 15.35 (NPNF, 8:21).

²Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 351.

³Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, pp. 317-318.

⁴Orations 45.8 (NPNF, 7:425): "This being He placed in paradise—whatever that paradise may have been (having honoured him with the gift of free will, in order that good might belong to him as the result of his choice, no less than to Him Who had implanted the seeds to it)—to till the immortal plants, by which is perhaps meant the Divine conceptions, both the simpler and the more perfect; . . . And He gave Him a law, as material for his free will to act upon."

⁵Ibid. 45.7 (NPNF, 7:425): "Now the Creator-Word, determining to exhibit this, and to produce a single living being out of both (the invisible and the visible creation, I mean) fashions man; and taking a body from already existing matter, and placing in it a Breath taken for Himself (which the Word knew to be an intelligent soul, and the image of God), as a sort of second world, great in littleness, He placed him on the earth, a new Angel, a mingled worshipper, fully initiated into the visible creation, but only partially into the intellectual; half-way between greatness and lowliness; in one person combining spirit and flesh; spirit because of the favour bestowed on him, flesh on account of the height to which he had been raised; the one that he might continue to live and glorify his benefactor, the other that he might suffer, and by suffering be put in remembrance, and be corrected if he became proud in his greatness; a living creature, trained here and then moved elsewhere; and to complete the mystery, deified by its inclination to God."

⁶Ibid., 45.8-9.

he taught that man has inherited a weakened will.¹ Like Irenaeus he saw death as an act of mercy on God's part for the purpose of diverting the horrendous effects of sin.² Children were not only innocent³ but involuntarily partakers in Adam's sin and its effects.⁴ Upon dying, unbaptized infants, having committed no actual sin of their own, received neither the punishment nor the honor of heaven.⁵ Later, Augustine would list Gregory

¹Ibid., 45.8 (NPNF, 7:425): "Alas for my weakness, for that (weakness) of my first father was mine." Cf. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 288, where this inherent weakness is elaborated upon in Gregory's poemata historica: carmina 2: "We may therefore claim that the underlying conception revealed in these lines is that of the inherent infirmity."

²Orations 45.8 (NPNF, 7:425): "Yet here too he makes a gain, namely, death and the cutting off of sin, in order that evil may not be immortal. Thus, his punishment is changed into a mercy, for it is a mercy, I am persuaded, that God inflicts punishment." Compare this with Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.23.5.

³Dogmatic Poem 1.85. Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 221. Cf. Orations 40.28.

⁴Ibid., 40.23.

⁵Ibid., (NPNF, 7:367): "The third [infants] will be neither glorified nor punished by the righteous Judge, as unsealed and yet not wicked, but persons who have suffered rather than done wrong. For not every one who is not bad enough to be punished is good enough to be honoured; just as not every one who is not good enough to be honoured is bad enough to be punished." This and other statements implying condemnation in the wake of Adam's transgression have led to some disagreement among scholars as to whether Gregory taught original guilt. Tennant held that Gregory believed in original guilt and cited several examples in his works that led to that conclusion, though he believed Gregory stopped short of the Augustinian notion of total depravity. Tennant wrote, "this Father sometimes speaks of Adam's sin as having brought punishment and condemnation upon us all. He also calls it 'our' sin, thereby implying some undefined form of the doctrine which was soon to occupy an all-important place in the theology of Augustine. Gregory, in fact, held the doctrine of Original Guilt." Sources of Original Sin, pp. 318-319. Williams, on the other hand, contended that the reference was in actuality too vague, though "tantalizingly" so, and that it would be more correct to explain the vague references in the light of the recapitulation concept of Irenaean tradition. See Ideas of the Fall, pp. 288-292. Gregory was primarily concerned with meeting the Apollinarian crisis and his treatment of sin is not so much an exposition of the Fall doctrine as a using of the doctrine to meet that Christological dilemma. For indications of this recapitulation theme in Gregory see his Orations 30.5, 6. Nevertheless, Gregory makes incidental statements about "our"

as a forerunner of his view,¹ and though this was probably premature, Gregory's descriptive language does move closer to depravatio.²

The third of the Cappadocians was Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa (c.330-c.395), the younger brother of Basil of Caesarea, and close friend of Gregory of Nazianzus. Of the three bishops he wrote the most on the subject of sin and its connection to Adam.³

For Gregory, Adam was typical of the human race and he was not concerned with defending the historicity of the Genesis account of the Fall too literally.⁴ Although sharing the traditional Eastern traits that have by

being involved with Adam and his lament of woes over the entrance of sin clearly indicates that Adam's sin opened the door to inherent weakness. Orations 33.9 (NPNF, 7:331): "And further, above this, we have in common reason, the Law, the Prophets, the very sufferings of Christ, by which we were all without exception created anew, who partake of the same Adam, and were led astray by the serpent and slain by sin, and are saved by the heavenly Adam and brought back by the tree of shame to the tree of life from whence we had fallen." Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 350. For the lament passage see quotation in Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 289-290.

¹See Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 35. Moxon insists that this is premature of Augustine.

²Williams has pointed out that for a recapitulationist transmission of will can be nothing more than a physiological heredity. Here one can see the relevance of Gregory for the Apollinarianism which insisted that Christ was of necessity not fully human since his $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ was divine. For Gregory, Adam sinned first with his $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, therefore (from the viewpoint of recapitulationist presuppositions) Christ must assume the human $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ to qualify as the Savior of man. See Ideas of the Fall, p. 291.

³See Tennant, Sources of the Fall, p. 319.

⁴Gregory was concerned with getting at the truth taught by the Fall story of Moses. He refers to it as "a doctrine . . . under the disguise of an historical manner," and as "a disguise of history" to convey "a teaching which is more plain." "As he [Moses] tells us, the earliest of mankind were brought into contact with what was forbidden, and these were stripped naked of that primal blessed condition, the Lord clothed these, His first-formed creatures with coats of skins. In my opinion we are not bound to take these skins in their literal meaning." Great Catechism 8 (NPNF, 5:482-483). For a history of this allegorical interpretation, see Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 251, 275, 285-286.

now become so familiar, viz., recapitulationsim,¹ freedom of will,² and deification,³ Gregory elaborated on the origin of man in a slightly different manner than his predecessors.

Gregory's earlier theory of creation and the Fall⁴ explained that God had made man in two distinct phases, one "in the image of God" and a second in likeness to the brutes, or the non-rational creation. His distinctions are primarily in relation to the sexual components of the race. The first phase involved a type of reproduction of which Gregory was vague except to say it was like the angels, i.e., non-sexual.⁵ This was the glorious, heavenly, or angelic state of archetypal man. A second phase involved the creation of sex in man: "male and female he created them."⁶ This sexizing was necessary for man if he fell (and God foresaw that he would) for upon

¹Ibid., p. 280.

²Great Catechism 5 (NPNF, 5:478-479): "Man comes to his birth upon these conditions, namely to be a partaker of the good things of God, necessarily he is framed of such a kind as to be adapted to the participation of such good. . . . For he who made man for the participation of His own particular good, and incorporated in him the instincts for all that was excellent, in order that his desire might be carried forward by a corresponding movement in each case to its like, would never have deprived him of that most excellent and precious of all goods; I mean the gift implied in being his own master, and having a free will. . . . Was it not, then, most right that that which is in every detail made like the Divine should possess in its nature a self-ruling and independent principle, such as to enable the participation of good to be the reward of its virtue?"

³Ibid., 5 (NPNF, 5:478): "It [was] needful that a certain affinity with the Divine should be mingled with the nature of man." Cf. *ibid.*, 37 (NPNF, 5:506): "The God who was manifested infused Himself into perishable humanity for this purpose, viz. that by this communion with the Deity mankind might at the same time be deified."

⁴Seen in his work On the Making of Man (c.380). See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 270-274 for the theory.

⁵See *ibid.*, p. 271. Gregory never said that he knew how angels produce but it is apparent that it was not sexuality as man presently understands it.

⁶Gen 1:27.

disintegration or disorder of the soul this paradisiacal or angelic ability would be lost. Yet accompanying sexualization was the lower nature with its undesirable tendencies such as pride and greed. While maintaining a free will, man became involved in perversions of good, that is to say, evil.

The obvious problem with this first theory was that God became the ultimate author of sin and while Manichaeism could accommodate such a notion the monotheistic Christian view of one righteous God would not. Apparently recognizing these insurmountable theological implications Gregory proposed a different theory some time later (c.385) in his Catechetical Oration. The new theory saw the archangel of earth, filled with envy for the newly created man, successfully deceive him into sin. Thus Gregory was released from those Manichaeism tendencies and further complications regarding God as the originator of sin.¹

Because of the Fall all mankind is involved in "concupiscence" (τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός) transmitted to him from Adam, apparently by physical means. It was through Adam's Fall that man put on the "coats of skins," that is, mortality,² but through the same avenue man inherited sinfulness. Comparing Gregory to Basil, Kelly makes this observation:

¹Great Catechism 5 (NPNF, 5:479): "That the life of man is at present subject to abnormal conditions is no valid proof that man was not created in the midst of good. For since man is the work of God, Who through His goodness brought this creature into being, no one could reasonably suspect that he of whose constitution goodness is the cause, was created by his Maker in the midst of evil. . . . No growth of evil had its beginning in the Divine will. Vice would have been blameless were it inscribed with the name of God as its maker and father."

²Ibid., 8. The "coats of skins" is a recurring phrase in Eastern thought in the tradition of Origenian allegorism of Gen 3:21 (see Origen, Homily on Leviticus 6.2). This symbol was considered useful by the two Cappadocian Gregories, who tended to see a mythical nature in the Adam story. See Gregory of Nazianzus, Orations 45.9, and Gregory of Nyssa, Great Catechism 8. The earlier post-Origen eastern writer, Methodius, denied this interpretation (see Tennant, Sources of the Fall, p. 309).

Gregory of Nyssa is much more outspoken. Not only does he describe the humanity assumed by Christ as "prone to sin" (ἡμαρτητικὴν), and sin as "congenital to our nature," but he can write: "Evil was mixed with our nature from the beginning . . . through those who by their disobedience introduced the disease. Just as in the natural propagation of the species each animal engenders its like, so man is born from man, a being subject to passions from a being subject to passions, a sinner from a sinner. Thus sin takes its rise in us as we are born; it grows with us and keeps us company till life's term."¹

In spite of his strong statements concerning man's situation, Gregory did not consider man's freedom of will to be obliterated,² and it was still possible for man to achieve sinlessness.³ Evil was primarily a deprivation and thus had no existence,⁴ yet it was also a biological depravity, a substantial "poison," whose antidote was found in the Eucharist.⁵

Gregory repudiated original guilt in his opposition to infant baptism⁶

¹Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 351.

²Great Catechism 30 (NPNF, 5:498): "This is the will, a thing that cannot be enslaved, and of self-determining power, since it is seated in the liberty of thought and mind."

³Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 274. Here are reminiscences of Athanasius who said that both Jeremiah and John the Baptist had attained to sinless perfection. See Athanasius, Against the Arians 3.33.

⁴Great Catechism 5 (NPNF, 5:479-480): "For as sight is an activity of nature, and blindness a deprivation of that natural operation, such is the kind of opposition between virtue and vice [evil]. It is, in fact, not possible to form any other notion of the origin of vice than as the absence of virtue. . . . As long as the good is present in nature, vice is a thing that has no inherent existence."

⁵Ibid. 37. This is not a new idea in Gregory. In Ignatius' Epistle to the Ephesians 20:2 (ANF, 1:93), the Eucharist is called "the medicine of immortality, and the antidote which wards off death but yields continuous life in union with Jesus Christ."

⁶Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 278. Infants who die are placed beyond the reach of God's punishments. "Gregory's humane and reasonable suggestion of some state analogous to what was later called the limbus puerorum, as the solution of this problem, stands in the most vivid contrast to the heartless fanaticism with which Augustine condemns unbaptised little ones to eternal fire, and is the surest warrant that he was completely out of sympathy with the theory which impelled the Doctor of Hippo to this gruesome conclusion." Ibid., p. 279.

but he introduced a curious mixture of cherished Eastern proclivities and Western traducianism which indicates some foreshadowing of Augustinianism.¹

The Antiochene School

Discussion of the Antiochene Fathers includes the views of John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrrhus. Like other Easterners of this period, the Antiochenes of the fourth and fifth centuries shared a mutual belief that man was free and innocent at birth, that death is the legacy of Adam, and any attempt to construe a doctrine of inherited guilt in them is contrived.

In the sermons of John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople (c.344/345-407), there is a great deal of optimism regarding man. Chrysostom presents no doctrine of inherited sinfulness in general or inherited guilt in particular² and can hardly be considered much of witness for Augustine, although the latter appealed to him for support.³

¹Tennant remarked that Gregory of Nyssa stood "at the threshold of the Augustinian era" and that he represented a readiness on the part of Eastern theology "to assimilate the more essential features of the theory which was soon to dominate . . . with regard to the origin and propagation of human sin." Sources of Original Sin, p. 324. Williams summarizes: "The Adam-tradition exists [in Gregory of Nyssa], and he admits its general claim upon his allegiance; but the philosopher's stone of allegorism enables him to transmute its pictorial details into metaphysical or psychological concepts, and he uses this power with great freedom. It is clear that there is as yet no question of a stereotyped ecclesiastical dogma." Ideas of the Fall, p. 282.

²Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v., "Original Sin."

³Chrysostom's position on sinless infants who are to be customarily baptized (infants are to be baptized, but they are not guilty of any sins; see An Address to the Newly Baptized) gave a reference which would later be used by both Augustine and Julian in the Pelagian controversy. Julian would use the passage to show that Chrysostom did not hold an original sin doctrine, while Augustine would explain "sins" as actual sin. Augustine, Against Julian 1.21ff. See further Henry Bettenson, ed. and trans., The Later Christian Fathers (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 169. Cf. Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 324.

While he makes a few references to the effect of Adam's sin on his posterity, Chrysostom generally minimizes the result of that transgression.¹ The major consequence of Adam's Fall is mortality rather than sinfulness.

"Through the wrong-doing of one man many became sinners" [Rom 5:19]. That, when Adam sinned and became mortal, those who were descended from him should become mortal also has nothing improbable about it. But how should it follow that from his disobedience anyone else should become a sinner? For unless a man becomes a sinner on his own responsibility he will not be found to deserve punishment. Then what does "sinners" mean here? I think it means those liable to punishment, that is, condemned to death.²

He does speak of an "ancestral debt" which Adam incurred and sees Christ as paying that debt.³ but he is opposed to any view which would make one man accountable for another man's deeds.⁴

The penalty of death which Adam brought to the human race included "concupiscence,"⁵ though the term was not to imply anything "of the nature of sin."⁶ And like other Eastern theologians of his time, Chrysostom maintained that man is free and has the ability to respond to God, even to move toward God. One desires, inclines himself to good, and is then empowered by God to receive.⁷

¹Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 325.

²Homily 10 on Romans.

³Reese, "Current Thinking on Original Sin," p. 96.

⁴Homily 16 on Romans, (NPNF, 9:464): "That when one had sinned all should be punished, does not seem to be so very reasonable to most men." This appears to be a general principle. The context is the justifying work of Christ.

⁵Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 351.

⁶Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 326.

⁷Homily 12 on Hebrews, (NPNF, 14:425): "It depends then on us, and on Him. For we must first choose the good; and then He leads us to

In short, Chrysostom has no doctrine of inherited guilt or sinfulness, and no real development of solidarity in Adam. There is a suggestion of some solidarity by way of the notion that his transgression brought mortality. Man is free and children are innocent.¹

Theodore (c.350-428), Bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia, is well known for his role in the development of Antiochene Christology.² Traditional treatments of Theodore's view of original sin insist on his round denial of the doctrine,³ and emphasize his alleged teaching that death was a created phenomenon rather than the result of Adam's transgression.⁴ However, since the discovery of his Catechetical Sermons (in 1932) there has been a

His own. He does not anticipate our choice lest our free-will should be outraged. But when we have chosen, then great is the assistance He brings us."

¹These components of Chrysostom's thought have led Kelly to judge his answers as superficial. Early Christian Doctrines, p. 352.

²He was a disciple of Diodore of Tarsus and the teacher of the famed heretic Nestorius. He was condemned for his views on Christ at the second ecumenical council of Constantinople in 553. His emphasis on the humanity of Christ was in reaction to the Alexandrian position which he felt destroyed the reality of that nature. See Catechetical Sermons 5.9 See further, New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Theodore of Mopsuestia," by D. F. Wright.

³Theodore has been called the "father of Pelagianism," an "eastern Pelagius," "almost an avowed Pelagian," and an "entertainer" of Julian of Eclanum, the famous friend of Pelagius. See respectively, New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Theodore of Mopsuestia;" Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 373; and Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 39. The term "father of Pelagianism" was employed by Marius Mercator (c.418-452), a Christian polemicist who composed two anti-Pelagian works and wrote against Theodore's Christological views. See New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Marius Mercator," by Daniel C. Scavonne. Cf. Lohse, Short History, p. 105.

⁴Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 327: "He stands out in a somewhat isolated position in that he repudiates the practically universal belief that Adam's transgression was the cause of mortality to all mankind." See also The Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Original Sin," by S. Harent: "Theodore of Mopsuestia opened this controversy by denying that the sin of Adam was the origin of death." Harent is here relying on the testimony of Mercator.

re-evaluation of Theodore that has led to the suggestion that he was probably more Eastern than Pelagian.¹

Theodore affirmed the free will of man and denied that that freedom was lost through Adam's Fall.² He also shared the synergism of his friend John Chrysostom, and the resultant perfectibility of man.³ Salvation was to be realized in sinlessness not the removal of original guilt.

Theodoret (c.393-c.466), Bishop of Cyrrhus (Syria), adds little to this discussion except to show that the Eastern doctrine of sin progressed minimally in four centuries from the early years. In Theodoret there is an evil bias (ῥοπή) in human nature but death is the result of personal sin rather than the sin of Adam.⁴ Characteristically, Theodoret does not teach original guilt nor that infants must be baptized on account of sin.⁵

The Antiochene school shows essentially no development in the earlier Eastern tradition on sin. It is occupied more with Christological concerns and there is almost no indication of influence from the developing doctrine of sin in the west.

¹This work has given a more balanced picture of his teaching on this subject and shows that his writings were tampered with by his detractors. See Bettenson, The Later Christian Fathers, p. 17. Kelly takes issue with the traditional evaluation of Theodore on sin and death. See his discussion in Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 373ff. While it is true that the bishop of Mopsuestia wrote a now lost treatise denying the reality of original sin, Kelly suggests that "there are few, if any, traces of the alleged Pelagianizing strain in his authentic works, unless the Eastern attitude generally is to be dismissed as Pelagian." Kelly concludes that Theodore seems to have shared the widespread notion of death and sin being the result of Adam's rebellion.

²Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 373-374. Cf. Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 40.

³Lohse, Short History, p. 105.

⁴Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 373.

⁵Ibid.

Summary

The Irenaean, or early Eastern, model can be summed up as having the following characteristics generally held in common:

1. Sin and salvation are seen largely within the framework of the recapitulation doctrine. Original man is generally viewed as infantile, or childlike, and capable of good or bad development. The wrong use of the will caused the sinfulness or mortality of the race. The right use of the will by Christ caused the possibility of salvation.

2. Adam tends to be a type of man in general, and there seems to be a common tendency to allegorize the Genesis story.

3. Adam's [man's] transgression is viewed as a Fall—something in which man loses his pristine qualities; either his purity or his supernatural endowments, but not his free will.

4. Man in some way inherits weakness of will, concupiscence, sinful bias, or propensity through the Fall. There is a solidarity with Adam, yet guilt is not clearly indicated to be an inherited factor. There is an optimism to this theology which rules out this possibility. Consequently, infant baptism is not stressed as necessary.

5. Salvation is restoration through deification—a process that brings the Logos into union with the believer.

6. Sin is viewed more as a negative deprivation than as a positive radical depravation. Since God did not create sin (a logical impossibility), it therefore cannot exist. Being non-existent sin must be deprivatio.

7. Mortality is the major consequence of Adam's sin.

Development of the Western View of Sin

While Irenaeus' theology found a hearing in the Eastern sector of the church, there was a clear line of tradition from Tertullian in the West

through Cyprian, Lactantius, Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose, and Ambrosiaster, to Augustine.

Tertullian

A Christian lawyer and teacher in Carthage, North Africa, Tertullian (c.160-225) contributed significantly to the traducian framework in which original guilt was finally to be reasoned from the Biblical evidence.¹ His doctrine was not as advanced as that later posited by Augustine in that it stopped short of original guilt.²

In common with previous church fathers Tertullian taught the freedom of man's will and that living in harmony with God's law was the goal of salvation.³ Even with the loss caused by Adam there was much good

¹Pelikan has pointed out that Tertullian is important in this development because he was apparently the first of the post-apostolic writers to give concentrated attention to the fateful implications of Adam's sin. Where his predecessors had held to a superficial view of sin as something actual or moralistic, Tertullian began to see the radical nature of it. See Development of Christian Doctrine, pp. 91-92. See also Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 240-241; Lohse, Short History, pp. 104-109; Haggglund, History of Theology, pp. 52, 65-67; and Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 41. Heick gives Tertullian the credit for being "the first to teach original sin" and refers to him as the "pioneer theologian" on sin and grace who became normative for the Western church, particularly in his doctrine of original sin. History of Christian Thought, 1:194.

²Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 240-241. Such a judgment is based to a large extent on Tertullian's view of infant baptism. Had he viewed original sin as original guilt, Williams proposes, Tertullian would surely have required infant baptism rather than seriously counseling Christians to avoid baptism until the candidate had had thorough training. Because of his dread of post-baptismal sin, he opposed paedobaptism. Tertullian thinks "rather of the terrible danger of post-baptismal actual sin which haunts those who receive the rite without long and searching preparation and mature purpose; hence he vehemently urges the postponement of baptism in the cases of children and unmarried adults." *Ibid.*, p. 241. But Tertullian was the precursor of Augustine in a way no one had been up until his time, and through his disciple Cyprian he provided one of the last major links in the Western development of the doctrine. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 295.

³Haggglund, History of Theology, p. 56. Cf. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:123, and Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 1:98-99.

left in the soul.¹ Man sins by his own volition and God is to blame neither for the entrance nor the propagation of sin.² Man is not good by nature but good by creation—disposed to good:

Entire freedom of will, therefore, was conferred upon him in both tendencies; so that, as master of himself, he might constantly encounter good by spontaneous observance of it, and evil by its spontaneous avoidance; because, were men even otherwise, circumstanced, it was yet his bounden duty, in the judgment of God, to do justice according to the motions of his will, regarded, of course, as free.³

Yet in spite of this free will, man finds himself involved with evil bias and action, a primeval uncleanness, and even though a child has not committed actual sin he has the "infection" of the transmission of Adam.⁴ Baptism removes the stain of impurity and is even necessary for salvation.⁵

¹Defense of Christianity 17 (ANF, 3:32): "Though under the oppressive bondage of the body, though led astray by depraving customs, though enervated by lusts and passions, though in slavery to false gods; yet, whenever the soul comes to itself, as out of a surfeit, or a sleep, or a sickness, and attains something of its natural soundness, it speaks of God; using no other word, because this is the peculiar name of the true God. On the Soul 41 (ANF, 3:220): "Still there is a portion of good in the soul, of that original nature. For that which is derived from God is rather obscured than extinguished. It can be obscured, indeed, because it is not God: extinguished, however, it cannot be, because it comes from God. As therefore light when intercepted by an opaque body, still remains, . . . so likewise the good in the soul. . . . even in the worst there is something good, and in the best there is something bad."

²Against Marcion 2.6 (ANF, 3:302-303): "The goodness of God, then fully considered from the beginning of His works, will be enough to convince us that nothing evil could possibly have come forth from God; and the liberty of man will, after a second thought, show us that it alone is chargeable with the fault which itself committed." On the Exhortation to Chastity 2 (ANF, 4:51): "We ought not to lay to the account of the Lord's will that which lies subject to our own choice; (on the hypothesis) that He does not will, or else (positively) nills what is good, who does nill what is evil, in antagonism to God's will, who wills what is good."

³Against Marcion 2.6 (ANF, 3:302).

⁴On the Resurrection of the Body 34; On the Soul 3, 39, 40; Against Marcion 5.17. See also Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 175-176.

⁵On Baptism 13 (ANF, 3:676): "Grant that, in days gone by, there

However, Tertullian did not urge the practice of infant baptism¹ but maintained a comparative innocency of infancy.² Since hereditary life processes operate through the father, Christ is preserved from sinful flesh.³

To explain how the infection of sin was spread Tertullian took an analogous framework from Stoic materialism, i.e., traducianism, which became his weapon against Gnosticism and formed the core of his theological realism.⁴ Following the lead of the Stoic analogy, Tertullian argued for the material nature of the soul (in the sense of immaterial substance—that which stands under), that originated with God (even God was substantial),⁵

was salvation by means of bare faith, before the passion and resurrection of the Lord. But now that faith has been enlarged, and is become a faith which believes in His nativity, passion, and resurrection, there has been an amplification added to the sacrament, viz., the sealing act of baptism; the clothing, in some sense, of the faith which before was bare."

¹Ibid., 18. Cf. Pelikan, Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 91.

²Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 43.

³On the Flesh of Christ 16. The same argument is used by modern traducian theologians such as W. G. T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology 1:8ff.

⁴See Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:126; and Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 233ff. Williams reminds of Tertullian's debt to philosophy in spite of his antagonism to philosophy. Cf. Prescriptions Against the Heretics 7. Stoicism taught that a fiery substance called God, or reason, permeated the material world and that the soul of man was a spark of that substance (or of the divine), literally "an offshoot of the Logos." See Eugene C. Bewkes et.al., The Western Heritage of Faith and Reason (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 307. This soul was corporeal, i.e., immaterial substance. It came from God and was transmitted physically to children by their parents. In truth, this philosophy was unadulterated pantheism but this is not to say Tertullian accepted it uncritically. On the contrary, he merely found the scaffolding (which later Christianity would in large part remove) by which to explain the transmission of Adam's sinful infection. Cf. Samuel E. Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, 2d. ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975), p. 122.

⁵Against Praxeas 7 (ANF, 3:602): "I, on the contrary, contend that nothing empty and void could have come forth from God, seeing that it is not put forth from that which is empty and void; nor could that possibly be devoid of substance which has proceeded from so great a substance, and has produced such mighty substances: for all things which were made through Him."

which though disembodied, retained its shape and form.¹ This substantial soul unites with the body to form man (though the soul is obviously not dependent upon the body). The union takes place in Adam and is individualized through natural generation.² Tertullian's materialism with regard to the soul led to the logical conclusion that even as the soul is transmitted to the children by their parents, so the sinful nature or taint of Adam, the parent of the race, is transmitted to the race as that nature becomes individualized.³

With Tertullian a giant step was taken toward what would become a characteristic of Western thought on original sin. His realism led him to

¹See On the Soul 9, for a full description of the process of man's creation.

²In his work On the Soul 19 (ANF, 3:200), Tertullian likens the soul to a "nascent sprout" derived from Adam "its root." Cf. Against Marcion 2.15, and On the Soul 20, 27. Shedd quotes Neander's description of Tertullian's traducianism: "It was his opinion that our first parent bore within him the undeveloped germ of all mankind; that the soul of the first man was the fountain head of all human souls, and that all varieties of individual human nature are but different modifications of that one spiritual substance. Hence the whole nature became corrupted in the original father of the race and sinfulness is propagated at the same time with souls." Dogmatic Theology, 2:7.

³His famous maxim was tradux animae, tradux peccati, i.e., the propagation of the soul implies (or requires) the propagation of sin. The Soul's Testimony 3 (ANF, 3:177): "In expressing vexation, contempt, or abhorrence, thou hast Satan constantly upon thy lips; the very same we hold to be the angel of evil, the source of error, the corrupter of the whole world, by whom in the beginning man was entrapped into breaking the commandment of God. And (the man) being given over to death on account of his sin, the entire human race, tainted in their descent from him, were made a channel [traducem] for transmitting his condemnation." On the Soul 40 (ANF, 3:220): "Every soul, then, by reason of his birth, has its nature in Adam until it is born again in Christ; moreover, it is unclean all the while that it remains without this regeneration; and because unclean, it is actively sinful, and suffuses even the flesh (by reason of their conjunction) with its own shame." Ibid., 41 (ANF, 3:220): "There is, then, besides the evil which supervenes on the soul from the intervention of the evil spirit, an antecedent, and in a certain sense natural, evil which arises from its corrupt origin [ex originis vitio]. For, as we have said before, the corruption of our nature is another nature [alia natura] having a god and father of its own, namely the author of (that) corruption."

concepts that were to become standard Augustinian notions: vitium originis, naturae corruptio, tradux peccati.¹ He stressed the solidarity of the human race in a seminal mode more explicitly than his predecessors and went beyond the Irenaeian mystical identity. By so doing he emphasized the malum animae, the evil of the soul, as second nature, and a common guilt of the race.² There is no question that he taught an inherited bias toward sin as the result of Adam's Fall,³ and he introduced the term concupiscentia which, though apparently considered neutral for him, went on to become so prominent in the Augustinian tradition.⁴ While he stopped short of an explicit doctrine of original guilt,⁵ Tertullian went beyond those who had gone before him. He emphasized a hereditary corruption that was more than weakness.⁶

Cyprian

With Cyprian (c.200-258) there came what proved to be the final necessary stage in the development of the Western doctrine of original sin.⁷

¹Brunner, Creation and Redemption, pp. 113-114.

²Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:126, 194-195.

³Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 175-177. Cf. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:123.

⁴Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 243-245. Cf. On the Soul 16.

⁵Ibid., p. 241. Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 176-177.

⁶Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 241. Williams termed it, "a depravatio rather than a deprivatio," viewing sin more as corruption than as a weakness. Yet the theological distinctions are becoming more minute and it is obvious that Western thought has not chosen to allow the doctrine of original sin to "relapse into meaninglessness." See *ibid.*, p. 208.

⁷Cyprian, who became Bishop of Carthage shortly after his conversion from paganism (c.246), is better known for his pastoral and administrative importance than for his theory. But in his writings are statements which give great insight into the doctrine of original sin. See Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Cyprian," and Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 295.

In addition to some inferential references¹ Cyprian defends the practice of infant baptism as follows:

If, when they subsequently come to believe, forgiveness of sin is granted even to the worst transgressors and to those who have sinned much against God, and if no one is denied access to baptism and to grace; how much less right do we have to deny it to an infant, who, having been born recently, has not sinned, except in that, being born physically according to Adam, he has contracted the contagion of the ancient death by his first birth. [The infant] approaches that much more easily to the reception of the forgiveness of sins because the sins remitted to him are not his own, but those of another.²

This explicit statement attributes to Adam the "contagion," resident in infants at birth, which requires infant baptism for cleansing or remedy. Pelikan has shown that Cyprian considered his arguments to be normative in Western tradition and rooted in church council authority.³

While Cyprian learned a great deal of his Christian theology from Tertullian, whose writings he devoured, it is clear that his connection of infant baptism to original sin⁴ (in such a way as to make the former necessary for the removal of the "contagion" inherited from Adam) was a

¹See Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:193.

²Epistles 64:5. Quoted in Pelikan, Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 80.

³See Development of Christian Doctrine, pp. 73-94. Pelikan attributes the late development of the doctrine of original sin in the West to the moralistic view of sin which was not demolished until Tertullian. But he maintains that the concept of original guilt did not develop until the practice of infant baptism needed a rationale. See *ibid.*, p. 92. Cyprian argues that baptism is to original sin as penance is to actual sin [a maiori ad minus argument] (*ibid.*, pp. 82ff.); that there was a relation between Jewish circumcision and Christian baptism [a fortiori argument] (*ibid.*, pp. 85ff.), and that infant baptism, as the church was practicing it, was the cure of original sin [a posteriori argument] (*ibid.*, pp. 85ff.).

⁴Origen also connected original sin with infant baptism, but Pelikan observes: "Both Origen and Cyprian accepted infant baptism as a given element of the sacramental practice of the Church; both were asking the question 'Whose sins?' But Cyprian answered the question by formulating a doctrine of original sin." *Ibid.*, p. 87.

departure from Tertullian. Pelikan has concluded that

Cyprian would thus appear to have been the first teacher of the Church to connect an explicit argument for the baptism of infants with an explicit statement of the doctrine that, through their physical birth, children inherited the sins of Adam and the death that was the wages of sin.¹

Lactantius

Lactantius² (c.240-c.320) was a north African Christian apologist and was not primarily concerned with writing material on the Fall. What he does mention indicates that he held no doctrine of original sin, but rather saw man's loss as a deprivation of external circumstances: physical immortality and the tree of life.³

Hilary

Hilary (c.315-367), Bishop of Poitiers, is better known for his defense of Nicene Christology than for his contributions to the Fall doctrine.⁴ The only development he makes (if it can be called such) is his repudiation of traducianism.⁵ But though Hilary abandoned Tertullian's mode of propagation, he failed to substitute another in its place and thus he solves no problems and only introduces indefiniteness to the scene.⁶ The same can

¹Ibid. This was to be greatly enlarged and expounded upon under the Pelagian controversy by Augustine, but not until he had received more foundational material from Ambrose and Ambrosiaster.

²Lactantius and Hilary were not significant contributors to a clear Augustinian doctrine of original sin. They are mentioned here simply to highlight their minor roles as part of the Western chain of development.

³Williams likens Lactantius to the Eastern Clement in his somewhat naive treatment of the problem. See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 297-298.

⁴He is called the "Athanasius of the West." Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Hilary of Poitiers, St."

⁵Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 299.

⁶Tennant, Sources of Original Sin, p. 388.

be said concerning his treatment of solidarity.¹ Hilary did retain the idea of the taint of man's nature (vitium originis)² in spite of the fact that he had dropped the traducian mode for inheriting it.³

Ambrose

Ambrose (c.339-397), Bishop of Milan, pastor and teacher to the great Christian theologian Augustine,⁴ provides many of the scattered concepts that Augustine would later put into his doctrine of original sin.⁵ He

¹Ibid. Williams writes: "Though the mould in which the idea of 'seminal identity' had been shaped into consistency and toughness is thus discarded, the idea itself stands fast; and there are two or three passages which seem to imply that the human race was in Adam, or was Adam, when he fell—such as the following 'in unius Adae errore omne hominum genus aberravit.'" Ideas of the Fall, p. 299.

²Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 299: "The vitium originis (we notice that this phrase, taken over from Tertullian has now become all but technical) is not transmitted directly from the soul of the progenitor to the soul of the offspring, but is acquired by the newly created soul through its union with the flesh; hence the flesh is the seat of 'Original Sin,' a theory which represents a return to the strictly Pauline view."

³Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 43.

⁴John K. Ryan, "Introduction," to The Confessions of St. Augustine (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1960), p. 24. Augustine was baptized by Ambrose in Milan in 387.

⁵Augustine acknowledged his mentor to be "a man famed throughout the world as one of its very best men," and it is not difficult to imagine Augustine hanging on Ambrose's every word as one reads his endearing descriptions in the Confessions. "That man of God received me in fatherly fashion, and as an exemplary bishop he welcomed my pilgrimage. I began to love him, at first not as a teacher of the truth, which I utterly despaired of finding in your Church, but as a man who was kindly disposed towards me. I listened carefully to him as he preached to the people, not with the intention I should have had, but to try out his eloquence, as it were, to see whether it came up to its reputation, or whether it flowed forth with greater or less power than was asserted of it. I hung eagerly on his words, but I remained uninterested in his subject matter or contemptuous of it. With the sweetness of his discourse I was delighted, which, although more learned, was less lively and entertaining than was that of Faustus. This applies to his style of speaking, for with regard to their subjects there was no comparison. The one man went wandering about among his Manichean fallacies, whereas the other taught salvation in a most salutary way. But 'salvation is far from sinners,' and such was I at that time. Yet little by

was the first Latin theologian to teach an unequivocal doctrine of Original Righteousness¹ and he sounds much like the Cappadocians in his description of Adam as "a heavenly being,"² "breathing ethereal air,"³ and "resplendent with celestial grace."⁴

Adam was created with free will and he fell through pride: "he wanted to claim for himself something which had not been assigned to him, equality with his Creator."⁵ This Fall destroyed the Original Righteousness and resulted in a depraved state of human nature, i.e., the loss of the divine image in man.⁶

The phenomenon of both the East and West presenting this "heavenly" view of Adam somewhat simultaneously [e.g., Gregory of Nyssa]

by little I was drawing closer to you [God], although I did not know it." Confessions 5.13.23 (Ryan, 130). Augustine's doctrine and his appeals to his teacher's thought has won Ambrose the position of "forerunner to Augustine" and "Augustinian before Augustine," and his input is apparent when his radical doctrine of sin is recognized. See Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:329; Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 300. Williams writes: "If we remember that it was in great part the attraction of Ambrose's majestic personality which drew Augustine through his great spiritual crisis to Catholic Christianity, and the hand of Ambrose which baptised and anointed him, we shall find it difficult not to believe that the brilliant young neophyte must have drunk in Ambrose's teaching on the Fall together with the rest of his dogmatic exposition of the Faith, through private catechetical instruction or through the homilies which the great bishop was accustomed to deliver in the basilica of Milan and to which the not-yet-converted Augustine listened entranced. If this is so, the place occupied by Ambrose in the history of the 'maximising' Fall-doctrine may be defined as that of the workman who collected the materials out of which the more gifted master-builder Augustine constructed the finished edifice."

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 300-301.

²On Psalms 118.15, 36 (LCE, 177).

³Ibid., 118.4 5 (LCE, 177).

⁴Ibid., 43.75 (LCE, 177).

⁵Ibid., 118.7, 8. Quoted in Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 353. Cf. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:329.

⁶Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 44.

has been attributed to the fact that Manichaeism was gradually sweeping across Europe.¹ It was the dualistic element in Manichaeism that led to the Christian emphasis on original righteousness which described Adam in terms as those mentioned above. Manichaeism would make sin a necessity of nature, a notion that was appealing to Augustine for a time in that he was concerned with explaining the presence of two opposing forces in the universe as well as in his own soul.² But in so doing he was forced to ask whether it was logically feasible or experimentally helpful to place blame for internal conflicts on external forces alone.³ His ultimately negative answer to these questions led Augustine finally to reject Manichaeism as a viable answer to the problem of evil and to opt for a Christian theodicy which maintained one good God.⁴

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 301. Perhaps the most famous Manichaean was none other than Augustine himself in the earlier years of his pilgrimage to truth. Ryan has summarized the teachings of this sect as follows: "It was gnostic, that is, it claimed to have a special knowledge that led to salvation; it was a form of extreme metaphysical and moral dualism, in that it held for the reality and power of evil as well as of good; it had its sacred literature, which it stressed rather than ritual; it rejected the Old Testament and subjected it to detailed attack; it likewise attacked the New Testament, although not rejecting it completely; it looked upon the body as evil and advocated a spurious asceticism; it claimed to appeal to reason and to offer a rational solution to the problems of life; it was a missionary religion and held that it was universal, not only in providing salvation for all men, but also in having spread over the whole civilized world." Ryan, "Introduction," pp. 20-21. Cf. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 301.

²Cf. Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 1:103-104: "To make a sin a necessity of nature is to render it excusable whereas it is totally inexcusable and basically inexplicable."

³See Stumpf, Socrates to Sartre, p. 140: "The presence of fierce passion was no less unsettling just because the 'blame' for it had been shifted to something outside of himself."

⁴Ibid. Cf. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, pp. 38-40. One must recognize again the place of action and reaction in the development of theology—that it is apparent from this new presentation of the originally righteous state of man that other thought forces, e.g., this Manichaean emphasis, were pushing at the boundaries of Christian theology. Williams,

The case for solidarity in Adam is strongly asserted in Ambrose's treatment of original sin: "Adam existed; and in him we all existed: Adam perished, and in him all perished."¹

In Adam I fell, in Adam I was cast out of Paradise, in Adam I died. How should God restore me, unless He find in me Adam, justified in Christ, exactly as in that first Adam I was subject to guilt (culpa obnoxium) and destined to death.²

We all sinned in the first man, and by natural inheritance an inheritance of guilt has been transferred from one man into all. . . . Adam was in each one of us: for in him human nature [condicio humana] sinned, because through one man sin passed over into all.³

Ambrose taught that the race somehow actually sinned in Adam,⁴ and thus he emphasized sin as a state as much as an act.⁵ Through Adam man became depraved in his very nature ("in him human nature sinned").⁶

Ideas of the Fall, pp. 301-302: "The affirmation of the co-eternity of good and evil inevitably drives the mind of the Christian society back upon the principle implied in its good and of the contingency of evil, a principle which since the Maccabean age has been embodied in the Fall-theory. And doubtless it was the peculiar vigour and compactness of the doctrines of Mani, as contrasted with the vagueness and variety of the systems collectively known as Gnosticism, which impelled Gregory of Nyssa in the East, and Ambrose in the West, all unconsciously to accentuate the idea of the Fall by prefixing to it the idea, borrowed from Jewish legend, of a state of paradisaal 'perfection,' which goes far beyond the conception of that 'infancy' which was attributed by the earliest Greek-Christian writers to the ancestor of the race."

¹An Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke 7.234 (LCF, 177).

²An Oration on the Death of His Brother Satyrus 2.6. Quoted in Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 354.

³A Defense of the Prophet David 2.12, 71 (LCF, 177).

⁴Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:330.

⁵Tennant, Sources of the Fall, p. 340.

⁶A Defense of the Prophet David 2.12, 71 (LCF, 177). This actual participation of mankind in Adam's sin would later be used by Augustine as a means of vindicating God in his handling of man's sin problem in that it was man who incurred culpability for sin in Adam—"In lumbis Adam fuimus." Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 44.

And yet, even though Ambrose saw mankind entering a sinful state in Adam, he kept the inherited contagion separate from guilt-sin, i.e., a propensity to sin was not treated as sin with personal, punishable culpability.¹ Inherited corruption is a congenital propensity to sin, but punishment is only meted out upon those who participate in actual sin, that is, one is not punished for Adam's sin.² This corruption is passed on from Adam through conception ("through one man sin passed over into all")³ and it increases from generation to generation.⁴

The work of Christ⁵ is applied through baptism and foot-washing. Ambrose wrote that Peter was clean through baptism but needed foot-washing

¹Letters 41.8 (FC, 26:387): "Not nature, but sin, had made us debtors; by our sins we contracted heavy debts so that we who were free became bound, for a debtor is one who uses any of a creditor's money. Sin is from the Devil. That wicked one, as it were, has these treasures among his possessions, for as Christ's riches are virtues, so the Devil's possessions are crimes. He had reduced the human race to everlasting captivity under a heavy debt of inherited liability, which our forefather, being under debt, had transmitted by legacy to his posterity."

²Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 355. Here Ambrose relies on Ps 51:5.

³A Defense of the Prophet David 1.76 (LCF, 177-178): "Before we are born, we are defiled by a contagion; before we enjoy the light, we receive the injury of our very birth. We are 'conceived in wickedness' (it is not clearly stated whether they are our sins, or the sins of our parents), and each one's mother gives birth to him 'in sins.' And here it is not expressly stated whether it is in her own sins that the mother gives birth or whether there are already some sins of the child who is being born. It may be that both are meant. Conception is not untainted by wickedness, since the parents do not escape the fall: and not even a day-old child is without sin." For the implications of this teaching for sexual intercourse as a channel of sin, see Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 304.

⁴See Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 354.

⁵The work of Christ seems to be described in the terminology of the classical, or dramatic, view of the atonement, also known as the "ransom theory" in which God essentially tricks the devil by paying him a ransom of his son but then reclaims Christ because the devil cannot hold a sinless person in the grave. See for example, An Exposition on the Gospel According to Luke 2 (LCF, 180): "He [God] deceived the powers for us: he deceived

because of the sin-state (corruption) he had inherited from Adam.¹ The guilt for personal sins is handled by baptism itself.²

Ambrose's treatment of the effect of this contagion on the will vacillates.³ He did not wish to confuse sinfulness with actual sin. The maintenance of this distinction was apparently aided by his rejection of Tertullian's traducianism while at the same time retaining a seminal identity with Adam, in a Platonic sense, i.e., hypostatized human nature (condicio humana).⁴ While all men sinned in Adam and are born "in sin," the will is not entirely depraved. The experimental result of this theology is a synergism such as that seen in the Eastern Fathers.⁵ The will somehow has the power to

so that he might conquer. He deceived the Devil when he was tested, when he was questioned, when he was called the Son of God, so that he should on no occasion admit his own divinity." See also *ibid.*, 4.12 (LCF, 181): "This trick had to be practised on the Devil, by the taking of a body by the Lord Jesus; and the taking of a body that was corruptible and weak: so that it might be crucified, because of its weakness." This view was introduced by Irenaeus and held by the Gregories and Augustine, among others. See further Gustaf Aulén, Christus Victor (New York: Macmillan, 1977).

¹See Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 354-355, for a pointed discussion of this notion. "Peter was clean, but he should have washed his feet, for he had the sin of the first man by succession, when the serpent overthrew him and persuaded him to error. So his feet are washed, that hereditary sins may be taken away; for our own sins are remitted through baptism." On the Mysteries 32 (FC, 44:16).

²On the Sacraments 3.7 (FC, 44:292). Notice Ambrose's homiletical pun in emphasizing the meaning of foot-washing: "'He that is washed, needeth not to wash again, but to wash his feet alone.' Why this? Because in baptism all fault is washed away. So fault withdraws. But since Adam was overthrown by the Devil, and venom was poured out upon his feet, accordingly you wash the feet, that in this part, in which the serpent lay in wait, greater aid of sanctification may be added, so that afterwards he cannot overthrow you. Therefore, you wash the feet, that you may wash away the poisons of the serpent."

³Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 45.

⁴Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 306.

⁵Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 45.

turn to righteousness by itself even though the Fall entailed the loss of original righteousness.¹

The importance of Ambrose is seen in the fact that he, along with Cyprian, constituted the chief support to which Augustine appealed, in the Pelagian controversy, to prove that his doctrine of original sin was not a personal dogmatic innovation.²

Ambrosiaster

A final link with the Augustinian formulation came through Ambrosiaster³ (c.375), who provided the "proof-text" for the Western doctrine of original sin.⁴ Ambrosiaster is clear that death (hell) is the result of a person's actual sin, not the sin of Adam.⁵ But he made one statement that led straightway into the Augustinian concept of original guilt, even though he may not have intended all that Augustine saw in it.

In whom, that is, in Adam, all sinned. The Apostle said "in whom" in the masculine gender (in quo) although he is speaking about the woman, for this reason, that his reference is to the whole race of man, not to the particular sex (which as a matter of fact sinned first). So then it is plain that all have sinned in Adam as in a lump (quasi in massa); for all the children whom Adam begat, having been himself corrupted by the woman (ipsa) through sin, have been born under sin. From him therefore all are

¹Ibid. Seeberg asserts that this emphasis is largely restricted to Ambrose's practical discourses, however, and that his thought is dominated by the notion that we sinned in Adam. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:329.

²Pelikan, Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 76. It must be emphasized that in spite of Ambrose's significant influence it remained the task of Augustine to put this doctrine in its most intelligible and systematic form.

³"Ambrosiaster" is a pseudonym supplied by Erasmus for a Commentary on Romans which appeared in Rome around 375. New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Ambrosiaster," by G. T. D. Angel.

⁴Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 307-308.

⁵Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 355.

sinners, because from him are we all; for Adam lost the gift of God when he transgressed, having become unworthy to eat of the tree of life, so that he died.¹

This interpretation derives from an apparent mistranslation or at least a faulty rendering, the Greek original ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον.² What resulted was a new understanding of Biblical support for a doctrine of original guilt.³

Summary

The Tertullian, or pre-Augustinian, Western model can be summed up as holding the following characteristics in common:

1. Adam was created with original righteousness. He was good by creation and celestial by nature. His Fall was both the deprivation of righteousness and depravation of nature.

2. Man's present state is not totally depraved for there is much good left in the soul. This goodness is able to move toward God.

¹Commentary on Romans 5.12, quoted in Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 308.

²Williams suggests that the Latin translation is not so very inaccurate if understood idiomatically to mean what the Greek meant: "insofar as all sinned." See Ideas of the Fall, pp. 308-309: "This rendering is inexact and ambiguous enough in all conscience, but it does not compel us to assume that quo is masculine; a reader who possessed only the Latin version, without any knowledge of the original Greek, and read it without any preconceived ideas as to 'Original Guilt,' would probably understand in quo as equivalent to quod or quantum, 'in so far as all sinned.' In any case the words unum hominem are too far distant from the relative quo to be its grammatical antecedent. Ambrosiaster has therefore bequeathed to Western Christendom as the supposed Scriptural foundation of its characteristic doctrine of 'Original Guilt' a gratuitous misunderstanding of a faulty rendering of what St. Paul actually wrote."

³Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 310. This understanding is not clear in Ambrosiaster himself when other material in his commentary is compared to it. If his other material is made to harmonize with that on Rom 5:12 then it may be that Ambrosiaster meant simply that mankind acquired its tendency to sin from Adam.

3. "In Adam" the whole human race sinned. Since the soul is propagated through natural generation it seems clear that sin is also passed on that way. The infection, bias, or primeval uncleanness is viewed from a traducian perspective. But this inherited sin is not punishable in infants, since they are not guilty of Adam's actual sin.

4. Inherited propensities are not to be properly called sin.

5. Infant baptism is required for cleansing from original sin (not all were agreed on this point).

6. As a rule the tradition of Tertullian stops short of a clear-cut original guilt doctrine, some in the tradition seeing the effects of Adam's sin restricted to physical consequences such as death and expulsion from the tree of life.

The Augustinian-Pelagian Debate

Augustine (354-430) is the central figure in the history of the doctrine of original sin. Before him all attempts to deal with the issue were preliminary; after his formulation all work is essentially commentary.

The extant corpus of Augustine's writings is massive¹ and the great theologian's life is well-known due largely to the survival and popularity of his spiritual autobiography, The Confessions, which tells of his unsettledness of mind, his bout with lust and the carnal nature, his thought journey from the Christianity of his birth to Mani, skepticism, and Plotinus, and finally to an adult commitment to Christianity through the influence of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. Augustine allows his life situation to temper his theological conclusions and is often charged with going beyond the Biblical

¹For a list of these works see Roy W. Battenhouse, ed., A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), and Berthold Altaner, Patrology, 2d ed., trans. by Hilda C. Graef (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962), pp. 496-517.

clarity into ethereal speculations allegedly implicit in the Scriptural data.¹

Augustine did not invent the doctrine of original sin though historians universally give him credit for the precise expression of certain aspects of the doctrine. He collected the existing data and did theology with that material in a way no Christian thinker before him had done. With his presuppositions he drove the Pauline material and subsequent tradition to what he saw as their ultimate conclusions. The result was a clear doctrine of original guilt, total depravity, inherited concupiscence through sexual lust, bondage of the will, and irresistible grace. These unique, extreme views are better understood in contrast to the views of his antagonists: Pelagius, Coelestius, and Julian, Bishop of Eclanum.²

Pelagius and the Pelagians

Pelagius is generally known as a British monk³ born around A.D. 360 and active in Rome as a teacher between 383-410.⁴ Trained in law,

¹See Paul Lehmann, "The Anti-Pelagian Writings," in Battenhouse, Companion to the Study of St. Augustine, p. 208.

²Adolf Harnack has observed that "there has never, perhaps, been another crisis of equal importance in Church history in which the opponents have expressed the principles at issue so clearly and abstractly" than the controversy between Augustine and the Pelagians. See History of Dogma, 5:169. Cf. Edmond La Beaume Cherbonnier, Hardness of Heart; A Contemporary Interpretation of the Doctrine of Sin (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), p. 85.

³Little is known of Pelagius' early life but historians cite the testimony of Augustine et al., that he was from Britain. That he was technically a monk appears to be less sure and seems based on his ascetic commitment. For a discussion of this see New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, s.v., "Pelagius, Pelagian Controversies," by F. Loofs. Lohse insists that he remained a layman and did not become a monk. Apparently Lohse is using the term in its technical sense. Kelly writes that Pelagius was commonly called a "monachus." See Lohse, Short History, p. 106, and Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 357.

⁴New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v., "Pelagius," by D. F. Wright.

Pelagius was a Christian moralist who was deeply distressed by the laxity that he found in the Roman church;¹ therefore, he was not so much concerned with philosophical expressions of the doctrine of sin as he was with the pastoral questions of correct Christian behavior.²

Pelagian thought was rooted in certain atomistic assumptions of anthropology. First of all, it was creationist and rejected the traducianist limitations implied by the solidarity of the race from a physical point of view.³ Secondly, it viewed sinful acts atomistically as well—no one act affected another insofar as any innate impairment of the will was concerned.⁴ It held that man is created with total moral freedom, no bias toward sin,

¹The gluttony, reading habits, promiscuity, gambling, and even involvement with the "black arts," among the Roman aristocracy, all contributed to this concern. See Peter Brown, "Pelagius and His Supporters: Aims and Environment," Journal of Theological Studies 19 (1968):95-96.

²Lohse, Short History, p. 108: "Pelagius was concerned about only one thing: to make all Christians of his day aware of God's demand for a holy life, and to make each individual conscious that he is held responsible should he break the divine law. . . . Pelagius took up dogmatic problems only in order to be able to give the needed emphasis to his practical demands for reform. In itself the reform which he desired had nothing to do with these problems. It was impossible for him however, to avoid taking a position with regard to the doctrine of original sin, a doctrine which in one form or another was already present in the church."

³Pelagius and his followers taught that Adam was created mortal and would have died regardless of whether he sinned or not. See Augustine, On Original Sin 12, who quotes the words of Coelestius. They accused those who held to a view of innate sin in the body, of being Manichaeans. See New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, s.v., "Pelagius, Pelagian Controversies," by F. Loofs.

⁴Coelestius, quoted by Augustine, On Original Sin 12 (NPNF, 5:240): "Adam's sin injured himself alone, and not the human race." Again, "Adam was created mortal, and would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned; that Adam's sin injured only himself and not the human race. . . . that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die through Adam's death or transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ." Quoted by Augustine, On the Proceedings of Pelagius 23 (NPNF, 5:193). Cf. Aulen, Faith of the Christian Church, pp. 241-242.

and no original righteousness.¹ Morally, man is neutral, with the power to choose good or evil.² Free will is a divine gift and Adam's subsequent sin affected it in no lasting way.³ Since the gift was atomistic (i.e., a universe of its own) Adam's posterity could be affected by it only if they followed the bad example of Adam.

For Pelagius this inalienable power of man's nature to do what is right was the crucial answer to the practical laxity of the church. Augustine's appeal to God ("Give what you command and command what you will")⁴ represented an incorrect view of the will. Since God had already given will to man, Augustine's request was absurd. God would not command something that man could not accomplish.⁵ Furthermore, if Augustine's conception were accepted, it would lead to justification of sinning.⁶

¹Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:108: "The Pelagian contends that such self-motion is insufficient. There must be an indefectible, inalienable power of alternative choice, in order to [sic] freedom of the will. But in order that there may be this constant power, the will must have no inclination in either direction."

²Augustine, On Original Sin 14 (NPNF, 5:241). Here Augustine quotes Coelestius: "Everything good and everything evil, on account of which we are either laudable or blameworthy, is not born with us but done by us: for we are born not fully developed, but with a capacity for either conduct; and we are procreated as without virtue, so also without vice; and previous to the action of our own proper will, that alone is in man which God has formed."

³Clark draws the implications of this kind of thought: "If the will is free, if it is not caused or determined, then no matter how many times one commits sin, the will still retains its original freedom and innocence. There can be no such thing as an evil character or a depraved nature, for this would be denial of freedom. Sin consists solely of specific acts, and after the act is finished no trace of sin remains." Gordon H. Clark, Thales to Dewey; A History of Philosophy (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1957), p. 243.

⁴Confessions 10.29.40 (Ryan, 255).

⁵Quoted in Augustine, On the Gift of Perseverance 53.

⁶Quoted in Augustine, On Man's Perfection in Righteousness 2.1.

It follows then, that since mankind remains unaffected by Adam's Fall, each person born into the world is born with a tabula rasa, i.e., without any bias or propensity toward sin (though it is true that all sin and all die).¹ Through the possibilitas utriusque partis (the power of contrary choice) man has the power to live a sinless life,² though this was to be qualified by the phrase "with God's help."³ Discussions about inclinations to sin, sensuality, and concupiscence (as sinful), and their connection to the Fall of Adam through some sort of heredity, were false dilemmas. Paul was not saying any such thing as "original sin."⁴ Coelestius, Pelagius' disciple, saw no cause-and-effect relationship between sin and death; death was not penal but natural, and man's mortality presupposed death regardless of sin.⁵

¹Such a conclusion inevitably led Pelagius to a sinless perfectionism which was more advanced and less guarded than that of either Athanasius or Gregory of Nyssa. In his book Perfection and Perfectionism (p. 290), LaRondelle gives a list of historical figures who Pelagius thought had achieved sinless perfection.

²Pelagius is quoted in Augustine, On Nature and Grace 8 (NPNF, 5:123): "I once more repeat my position: I say that it is possible for a man to be without sin. What do you say? That it is impossible for a man to be without sin? But I do not say . . . that there is a man without sin; nor do you say, that there is not a man without sin. Our contention is about what is possible, and not possible; not about what is, and is not."

³"A man could be without sin, and could keep God's commandments if he wished; for this capacity has been given to him by God." Quoted in Augustine, On the Proceedings of Pelagius 16 (PNF, 5.190).

⁴Lohse, Short History, p. 108: "It was impossible for him [Pelagius], however, to avoid taking a position with regard to the doctrine of original sin, a doctrine which in one form or another was already present in the church. Pelagius rejected the idea that there is such a thing as original sin inherited by all men from Adam by way of sexual reproduction. According to Pelagius it is impossible for God to hold a person accountable for the sins of another when He is willing to forgive the sins which a person has himself committed. Pelagius believed that the concept of original sin supports Manichaean dualism, which regards the body, as well as all matter, as the principle which is opposed to God and which holds the soul a prisoner."

⁵See Augustine, On Original Sin 12.

The universality of sin can only be explained on the basis of human beings practicing sinful acts. As one follows or imitates the bad example of Adam, he becomes involved in sins—longus usus peccandi, longa consuetudo vitiorum (the long usage of sinning, the long custom of vice),¹ but while this could be called "concupiscence" it was not to be seen as a perverseness of nature.² Freedom was essential to human nature, he averred; therefore, no practice could be allowed to destroy that freedom.³ This was an ontological question, for if man were to lose his freedom he would in some way cease to be man.⁴ So here is the substance of Pelagianism:

Evil is not born with us, and we are procreated without fault, and the only thing in man previous to the action of his own will is what God has formed.⁵

Sin is a fault of the will not the nature.⁶ "Grace" is the gift of free will—a "benefit of nature," the bonum naturae.⁷ "Living by grace" is

¹Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:198.

²Obviously, this is inconsistent since Pelagius' view of freedom did not allow for a vitiating effect of sin on man's being. Cf. *ibid.* See also Horton, Christian Theology, p. 156, and Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 342-344. Pelagius saw the natural bodily appetites of man as something negative (not sinful) and something which must be constantly suppressed. Julian saw this as a concession and rather insisted on the moral neutrality of such appetites.

³See Pelagius' distinctions between ability, volition, and actuality: "I am therefore free not to have either a good volition or action; but I am by no means able not to have the capacity of good." Quoted in Augustine On the Grace of Christ 1.5 (NPNF 5:219).

⁴Berkouwer, Sin, p. 430. In comparing this to Reformation thought, Berkouwer calls this view "very shallow," attempting to show why Pelagius would see Augustine's doctrine as a "flagrant contradiction to the essence of a free man, who was created by God as a good creature."

⁵Quoted in Augustine On Original Sin 2.14 (NPNF, 5:241).

⁶Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:334. Cf. Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 133.

⁷Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 134. Cf. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 359: "By grace, however, he really means (a) free will itself,

exercising the free will God created one with.¹ Thus grace becomes an action of the natural powers (as bestowed by God) and one needs merely to hear of and follow the moral example of Christ.²

God wished to bestow on his rational creation the privilege of doing good voluntarily, and the power of free choice by implanting in man the possibility of choosing either side; and so he gave him, as his own characteristic, the power of being what he wished to be; so that he should be naturally capable of good and evil, that both should be within his power, and that he should incline his will towards one or the other.³

Contrasting the Christian's privilege to that of the pagan, Pelagius demonstrated his hortatory use of this theology:

If men without God show the qualities which God has given them, think what Christians can achieve, since their nature and their life has been trained, through Christ, to a better condition, and they are also helped by the aid of divine grace.⁴

¹Quoted in Augustine, On the Proceedings of Pelagius 22 (NPNF, 5:193): "You know very well what I mean by grace; . . . Grace is that in which we are created by God with a free will." Cf. Augustine, On the Grace of Christ 1.4.

²Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 359.

³Letter to Demetrius (LCF, 194). This grace is a form of enlightenment. Cf. Williams' comparison between the Pelagian Savior and the Antiochene Christ, in Ideas of the Fall, pp. 349-351. In fairness one should note Pelagius' appeals to the assistance of God. He did not see his view as strict naturalism. Brown emphasizes this: "There is no out-and-out 'naturalism' in Pelagius, for the simple reason that the man who has recovered his natural capacity to act, inside the Christian Church, is discontinuous with any 'natural' man outside the Church." See Brown, "Pelagius and His Supporters," p. 103. Thus this exhortation to live holy is directed to the baptized believer in Christ. Cf. Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:197, and Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 360.

⁴Letter to Demetrius (LCF, 194). "Through Christ" refers to the example of Christ, or through Christ's example. Lohse represents Pelagius' view as follows: "How, then, can sin be avoided? Only by instructing men very expressly concerning the requirements of the divine law. Since Adam's fall the knowledge of the law has been forgotten. Even Moses' giving of the law did not basically change this situation. Now, however, Christ has instructed man anew concerning the true law of God. The Sermon on the Mount, especially, leaves no doubt as to what God demands of us." Lohse, Short History, p. 109.

The implications are clear. With man's having a free will, and sin viewed only as an act, the responsibility for each act lays squarely on the sinner. Once the act of sin is accomplished, sin is no longer present.¹ Therefore, moral (character) development cannot logically occur.²

Summary

The Pelagian view can be summarized as having the following characteristics:³

1. Every person is responsible for and guilty of his own sin—to see it any other way could be to court absurdity.
2. The "Fall" is in reference to individual sin where one forms his own pattern of sinning through the principle of imitation.

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 341. "A man may commit a sin one hundred times, and yet after the hundredth sin he is no more inclined to commit it, his will is no more biassed or trammelled than it was before he began the series of sinful acts."

²For further discussion on this see Clark, Thales to Dewey, pp. 243ff., and Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:334ff.

³Pelagius' disciples tended to be more theologically explicit, and less practically motivated, than their master. Coelestius drew out the implications of Pelagius' views to unbaptized infants, saints before the time of Christ, the rich, etc. He expounded on the intrinsic mortality of the newly created Adam. See Augustine's list of nine points of Coelestius in his On Original Sin 12. Julian of Eclanum attempted to develop Pelagianism into a theological system. In a brief but incisive critique of Pelagianism, Williams (Ideas of the Fall, p. 354-359) suggests several serious short-comings of this system of belief: (1) It is naive and simply untrue with regard to the empirical data on man; (2) it would have transformed a dynamic Christian religion into a dry lifeless puritanism of external codes; (3) its denial of the power of human habit is a dangerous position with respect to the possibility of a uniform life-style and has dastardly implications for human behavior; (4) it is fundamentally an irreligious system since it tends to destroy any kind of dependence on God; and (5) it actually magnifies all sin to the same level rather than, as is so commonly charged, minimizing sin, that is, it makes no allowance for mistakes but regards each mistake as seriously as any deliberate, horrendous act. Because of these inadequacies, the church rejected Pelagianism at both Carthage (A.D. 411, 416, 417) and Ephesus (A.D. 431).

3. Sin is primarily an act or attitude, but not a state or condition; therefore, sin does not constitute separation from God, and the radical nature of sin as depravity is altogether absent in Pelagian thought.

4. Since sin resides in the will and children have no will, small children are free from sin for they are unable to choose consciously to commit an act of sin.

5. Infant baptism is not to be denied altogether, but its meaning is to be found in consecration or adoption, not in cleansing.

Augustine

Augustine's formulation was refined, not created, through the Pelagian debate.^{1,2} His intention to demolish the Pelagian notion that man, sin, and will were to be viewed atomistically was a natural extension of his Ambrosian tutoring.³ Though his thought was not entirely original he

¹J. M. Reese, "Current Thinking on Original Sin," The American Ecclesiastical Review 157 (1967):96-97. Reese writes (p. 97): "His writings on the subject played a decisive role in the elaboration of the theologians of the Latin Church." Kelly shows that Augustine had worked out his doctrine of man prior to the controversy. See Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp. 361-362. Cf. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 326-327.

²It has often been observed that the remarkable contrast between the personal lives of Augustine and Pelagius undoubtedly contributed to their opposing viewpoints. Pelagius, writing from the calm background of his ascetic idealism, theorized a will capable of sinlessness. Williams terms Pelagianism "muscular Christianity." Ideas of the Fall, p. 333. Augustine, on the other hand, deeply involved in sin and lost in the world, unable and unwilling to follow God, wrote out of the thrill of having been found by God. Confessions 2.1.1. For an insightful look at the lives of both Augustine and Pelagius and the effect on certain aspects of their doctrines of sin and grace, see Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 330ff. See also Confessions 9.1.1, 7.20.26. Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 114-116, gives an analysis of the influence of Manichaeism and Neo-Platonism on Augustine.

³Lohse observes that "Augustine had developed the basic outline of his doctrine of sin and grace even before the beginning of the Pelagian controversy. He did not arrive, therefore, at his characteristic—in the light of tradition somewhat new—understanding of his doctrine through his opposition to Pelagius, but as a result of reading Scripture. During his days in the episcopacy Augustine developed this concept in a way which was bound

"imparted to the traditional doctrine of sin a profundity which it had not had before."¹ He believed his view represented the natural understanding implicit in church tradition,² and while he consistently maintained the supremacy of Scripture as authority, he did not shy away from appealing to tradition himself when it seemed necessary.³

Original man "was able not to sin, was able not to die, was able not to forsake good." Thus Augustine defined the original freedom of the will as "to be able not to sin" (posse non peccare).⁵ This was not an absolute or final freedom that guaranteed the inability to sin (non posse peccare):

The first liberty of the will was to be able not to sin, the last will be much greater, not to be able to sin; . . . The first was the power of perseverance, to be able not to forsake the good—in

to lead to controversy with Pelagius." See Short History, p. 112. See further on this, Aulen, Faith of the Christian Church, pp. 241-242.

¹Lohse, Short History, p. 114.

²In fact, both Augustine and Pelagius appealed to the fathers for support of their extreme views. Augustine objected that the latter's quoting of the fathers, such as Lactantius, Hilary, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Jerome, were appeals to material that was basically neutral and did not prove his point. On Nature and Grace 71 (PNF, 5:146): "Accordingly with respect also to the passages which he has adduced,—not indeed from the canonical Scriptures, but out of certain treatises of catholic writers,—I wish to meet the assertions of such as say that the said quotations make for him. The fact is, these passages are so entirely neutral, that they opposed neither our opinion nor his." He later charged Pelagius with selective research which in effect made the authors quoted say something they never meant to say. *Ibid.* 72-78. His argument was crowned by the ultimate appeal to the "canonical Scriptures" as the only witness which carried final authority. *Ibid.* 71. See also, On Marriage and Concupiscence 50.

³See, for example, his appeals to Cyprian and Ambrose: On the Gift of Perseverance 52; Against Two Letters of the Pelagians 4.28-33.

⁴On Rebuke and Grace 33 (NPNF, 5:485). Williams sees here the seeds of the later theology of the scholastics that saw in the original Adam a donum superadditum as contrasted to pura naturalia. See Ideas of the Fall, pp. 363-364.

⁵On Rebuke and Grace 33 (NPNF, 5:485).

the last will be the felicity of perseverance, not to be able to forsake the good.¹

Man's original uprightness was understood to mean a moral capacity in a good will.¹ Such a work was a work of God and the Fall of man was falling away from that work of God.² Also related to the Fall was the possibility of death. Originally God created man immortal in the sense of being able not to die (posse non mori) but when man fell he was brought into the possibility of death. Since his immortality was dependent on partaking of the tree of life (a gift of God), it was evident that God need only remove access to the tree to bring in mortality for sinners, which he did.³ Had he not sinned, man would have been able not to die.⁴

Man's rebellion, rooted in his own pursuits, constituted a forfeiting of those gifts, i.e., the ability not to die, and the ability not to sin. Man was therefore put out of the garden (for the former ability lay in partaking of the tree of life)⁵ and became enmeshed in a wrong orientation to God,⁶ i.e., original sin.⁷

¹Ibid.

²City of God 14:11.

³Ibid.

⁴A Literal Commentary on Genesis 6.26.

⁵City of God 14.11 (PNF, 2:272): "After that proud and therefore envious angel, preferring to rule with a kind of pomp of empire rather than to be another's subject, . . ." "Pride" is the root of sin: "Augustine defined sin as the 'perverse desire of height,' or as man's regarding himself as his own end, instead of realizing that he is but a part of a total scheme of means and ends" (Niebuhr, Handbook of Christian Theology, p. 348). "Because of his pride Adam wanted to be more than such a situation allowed. He not only wanted to cling to God, he also wanted to follow the desires of his own heart. The result was the fall, through which Adam forfeited the aid of divine grace. That which led him to the fall, however, was not a casual act of disobedience, which, as Pelagius thought, could be nullified by a new act of obedience. Through his pride, so Augustine felt, man destroyed the natural and proper constitution of his will." Lohse, Short History, p. 112.

⁶A Literal Commentary on Genesis 6.36.

⁷Lohse, Short History, p. 114. Cf. Clark, Thales to Dewey, pp. 237-245. The impossibility of sinning was always reserved for post-probation

Augustine emphasized the seriousness of the sin of Adam by asserting that all sins could be reflected in it. In a very striking exposition on Romans 5:12, in his Enchiridion, Augustine enumerates the sins of pride, blasphemy, murder, spiritual fornication, and theft, all to be found in Adam's sin.¹ Through this composite sin man became evil by choice in Adam and was justly condemned.²

Unlike Pelagius, Augustine did not consider Adam and his action from an atomistic bias. All acts are related because all mankind was in Adam at the Fall, that is, Adam constituted human nature which had yet to be individualized into the billions of persons who would be born.³ Thus each

mankind, had he passed, but being bound in evil as a wrong orientation to God rendered man's will no longer free. For Augustine evil does not "exist" since "whatsoever things exist are good." Thus, "if they shall be deprived of all good, they shall no longer be." Confessions 7:12.18 (NPNF, 1:110). To fall into sin thus became an ontological catastrophe.

¹Enchiridion 45 (NPNF, 3:252): "Even in that one sin, which 'by one man entered into the world, and so passed upon all men, and on account of which infants are baptized, a number of distinct sins may be observed, if it be analyzed as it were into its separate elements. For there is in it pride, because man chose to be under his own dominion, rather than under the dominion of God; and blasphemy, because he did not believe God; and murder, for he brought death upon himself; and spiritual fornication, for the purity of the human soul was corrupted by the seducing blandishments of the serpent; and theft, for man turned to his own use the food he had been forbidden to touch, and avarice, for he had a craving for more than should have been sufficient for him; and whatever other sin can be discovered on careful reflection to be involved in this one admitted sin."

²City of God 13.14 (NPNF, 2:251): "God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright; but man, being of his own will corrupted, and justly condemned, begot corrupted and condemned children. . . . And thus, from the bad use of free will, there originated the whole train of evil, which, with its concatenation of miseries, convoys the human race from its depraved origin, as from a corrupt root, on to the destruction of the second death, which has no end, those only being excepted who are freed by the grace of God."

³Ibid.: "For we all were in that one man, since we all were that one man, who fell into sin by the woman who was made from him before the sin. For not yet was the particular form created and distributed to us, in which we as individuals were to live, but already the seminal nature was

person is responsible for Adam's act itself.¹ That original sinful act was immediately imputed to the millions of human beings who were "in his [Adam's] loins."

Hence in accordance with the mysterious and powerful natural laws of heredity it followed that those who were in his loins and were to come into this world through the concupiscence of the flesh were condemned with him. . . . And so the sons of Adam were infected by the contagion of sin and subjected to the law of death. Though they were infants incapable of voluntary action, good or bad, yet because of their involvement in him who sinned of his own volition, they derive from him the guilt of sin, and the punishment of death: just as those who are involved in Christ, although they have done nothing of their own volition, receive from him a share in righteousness and the reward of everlasting life.²

there from which we were to be propagated; and this being vitiated by sin, and bound by the chain of death, and justly condemned, man could not be born of man in any other state." Häggglund observes: "The entire human race was involved in Adam's fall. The Biblical Adam is 'man' in general; all are epitomized in him, so that all of his descendants form a unity in him. As a result, all share in Adam's guilt, even though the presence of original sin in the individual is not dependent on an act of the will; it is there before the will begins to exert itself." Häggglund, History of Theology, p. 136.

¹City of God 12.8 (NPNF, 2:230): "The will could not become evil, were it unwilling to become so; and therefore its failings are justly punished, being not necessary, but voluntary. For its defections are not to evil things, but are themselves evil; that is to say, are not towards things that are naturally and in themselves evil, but the defection of the will is evil, because it is contrary to the order of nature, and an abandonment of that which has supreme being for that which has less." Cf. Enchiridion 23 (NPNF, 3:245): "I think there cannot now be any doubt, that the only cause of any good that we enjoy is the goodness of God, and that the only cause of evil is the falling away from the unchangeable good of a being made good but changeable, first in the case of an angel, and afterwards in the case of a man."

²Enchiridion 26 (NPNF, 3:246). Cf. *ibid.*: "Thence, after his sin, he was driven into exile, and by his sin the whole race of which he was the root was corrupted in him, and thereby descended from him, and from the woman who had led him into sin, and was condemned at the same time within—being the offspring of carnal lust on which the same punishment of disobedience was visited—were tainted with the original sin, and were by it drawn through divers errors and sufferings into that last and endless punishment which they suffer in common with the fallen angels, their corrupters and masters, and the partakers of their doom. And thus 'by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.'"

Here one can see the full implications of Ambrose, Tertullian, Cyprian, Irenaeus, and Ambrosiaster, complete even with the misunderstanding of Rom 5:12 which would read the text as "in Adam."¹ While it is clear that the roots of the doctrine are in these previous writers, it is also true that Augustine goes beyond them in his discussions, particularly, on the transmission of guilt (reatus).² Mankind becomes a massa perditionis due to Adam's act,³ punishable by eternal torment (massa damnata).⁴ Man is not only corrupt, he is guilty in Adam.⁵

¹On Marriage and Concupiscence 2.47; City of God 13.14.

²On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 2.11; City of God 14.1.

³Enchiridion 27; On the Grace of Christ 2.34; Cf. Cherbonnier, Hardness of Heart, p. 88: "He expressly held that, as a result of Adam's first sin, the entire human race was a 'lump of perdition' (massa perditionis), standing under a double curse. By a so-called 'seminal identity' with Adam it inherited a full share of his immeasurable guilt (reatus), though it had no part in his original transgression. By the process of generation each individual has infected with unruly and inordinate passion (concupiscentia) which both confirmed his guilt and at the same time constituted a partial punishment." See further Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 66.

⁴Enchiridion, 26-27. Man is incapable of producing good before God, save he who is elected by God as righteous. See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 375-376. Williams judges this theory of massa damnata as "inhuman," "pitiless," "morbid," "irrational," and "macabre"—one from which even Augustine appears to have shrunk at times. The fact that the African father sees the punishment of infants who have committed no personal sin as being only of the "mildest kind" seems to be some indication of his own difficulty in completely accepting such a notion (Enchiridion 93). Williams points out, however, that in Augustine's last work against Julian he takes a strong position in favor of unsaved infant damnation. See Ideas of the Fall, p. 378.

⁵See Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 136-137. The argument that would invalidate his theory of the biological transmission of guilt, namely, that if guilt is transmissible biologically so must righteousness be (in reference to Paul's analogy of Rom 5), Augustine dismissed simply by assertion that man has only guilt, not righteousness, to transmit. On the Merits and forgiveness of Sins 3.14. In man's very act of begetting, said Augustine, "he is moved thereto by the concupiscence which is in his members, and the law of sin is applied by the law of his mind to the purpose of procreation." Ibid. 2.11 (NPNF, 5:48). He uses John 3:6 as a proof text for this notion ("He who is born of flesh is flesh"), and finally counters by logic: "The righteous are righteous just because they are the sons of God;

Augustine's assumption that "concupiscence," or carnal passion, as a part of evil nature¹ (vitium) is the motivating factor in physical procreation, explains Ps 51:5 for him.² All men are born as a result of this passion and are thus contaminated.³ Because of this extreme seminal identity with Adam (though it stopped short of a clear-cut traducianism) even to the extent of inheriting his sin, infants were seen united to Adam in his guilt,⁴ stained with contagion (vitium), and covered with "filth,"⁵ i.e., literally "born in sin."⁶ True, sin is not the active product of an infant with free will (since an infant is born without free will), yet it is not to be considered

and as sons of God they do not beget by physical means, since they themselves were thus born spiritually, not physically." Ibid.

¹On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.57 (NPNF, 5:37). Augustine sees marriage as a good thing in that it harnesses the procreative drive of man and produces children. However, he stops short of ascribing "good" to a description of the drive itself. On the contrary, he asserts that using this "passion" for the production of children is making a good use of a bad thing. "He makes a good use of an evil thing," he writes, "when he restrains his concupiscence [sexual passion] by matrimony." Thus Christ is the only pure offspring in that he was produced without the sexual passion required of the procreative sex act. In this sense then Augustine's view of concupiscence is most often meant as sexual passion and is seen as the mode of transmission for vitium or depravity. For a discussion of this see Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 366, and Lohse, Short History, pp. 113-114.

²On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 3.13; On Original Sin 2.47; Against Two Letters of the Pelagians 4.4,29. Augustine suggests two possible interpretations of Ps 51.5: (1) in the sense of common humanity, or (2) in the sense of adulterous conception. Obviously, David was not born out of lawful wedlock, so the latter is rejected (On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.34). In the writings listed here Augustine used this text to prove the transmission of Adam's guilt.

³G. Vandervelde, Original Sin: Two Major Trends in Contemporary Roman Catholic Reinterpretation (Amsterdam: Rodopi N.V., 1975), p. 17.

⁴On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.24, 2.36-37.

⁵Job 14:4-5. In Against Two Letters of the Pelagians 4.27 (NPNF, 5:430), Augustine appeals to Cyprian and quotes Job: "No one is pure from filth, not one even if his life be of one day upon the earth."

⁶Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 366.

illogical to call original sin "voluntary" in that the infant derives from Adam and was "in Adam" at the Fall.¹ The final outcome which is God's just condemnation is resting even on the infant who has yet to act in rebellion against him.²

The solution to the problem of original sin lay exclusively in the hands of God—in God's election by virtue of his sovereignty. Here Augustine's theology became one of the triumph of God, and the positive nature of his theology is to be found in his own experience—he was living in Rome, lost and without God; he went to Milan, and God found him through his servant Ambrose; the Lord made him into a Christian, i.e., God took the evil and made good out of it. Thus without a will to act, and without a desire to will, man is at the literal mercy of God, who, though man

¹Revisions [Retractiones] 1.13, 5.

²Obviously such a view poses some problems for Augustine. Not the least of these is the dilemma regarding how Christ and the Incarnation fit such a scheme. Augustine did not really solve this problem though he did acknowledge that Christ was born as an infant "in order that He might for sin condemn sin," and thus "He assumed the likeness of sinful flesh." See On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.68 (NPNF, 5:42). Furthermore, it was the existence of the problem of concupiscence which explained why Christ had to be born of a virgin by the Spirit. See Williams' discussion, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 366-367. A second dilemma concerned what to do with infants born in such a hopeless estate. Here Augustine seemed to have more time. He insisted that Christ died for infants as well as for adults (On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.33; 3.8; On Marriage and Concupiscence 2.56), and that salvation could be theirs as well. He appealed to the Pelagians to allow the grace of God to penetrate the original sin surrounding the child by participating in the sacramental system of infant baptism. On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.24 (NPNF, 5:24): "Now, inasmuch as infants are not held bound by any sins of their own actual life, it is the guilt of original sin which is healed in them by the grace of Him who saves them by the laver of regeneration." Thus a church rite, which had found strong necessity in Cyprian, became a crucial requirement in Augustine. Not just a consecration of the child, as Pelagius viewed it, baptism became necessary to "wash away" the contagion of original guilt. Cf. Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 136. For a discussion on the Pelagian objection to this see Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 366ff.

is in the bonds of his own misdeeds, chooses to demonstrate his grace by saving some.¹

The history of dogma has given Augustine his due place in the development of Christian theology.²

¹Enchiridion 29. Augustine believed a fixed number of people were predestined to be saved by God. In contrast to Pelagius, Augustine distinguished four kinds of grace, all of which proceeded to God in a more objective manner than the British moralist had suggested, and necessary because of his more radical view of sin: (1) Prevenient grace—that which goes before to initiate response and motivation in the soul; (2) Cooperating grace—that which assists once the will is awakened; (3) Sufficient grace—that which Adam possessed in Eden, and (4) Efficient grace—that which is granted to the predestined saints for eternal salvation (see Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p. 367). Regardless of the kind, grace is free by its very definition; thus Augustine was sure that he had made his point that God was in no wise responsible for sin.

²Particularly during the Protestant Reformation was Augustine's theology used to demonstrate that without God man is doomed to fall short of salvation, that in his unrenewed state the best works of the sinner are far inferior to God's minimum requirements. Buchanan wrote, "The whole of Augustine's doctrine was directed to prove that man, in his unrenewed state, has no righteousness whatever, but must be indebted to God's sovereign grace, not only for the forgiveness of sin, but also for the gift of faith to receive it; and not after, since Augustine's doctrine recognized the remains of indwelling sin in the regenerate." James Buchanan, The Doctrine of Justification (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1867; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 92. In the words of Brunner: "His doctrine of sin, with all its faults, is a great achievement, without which the understanding of saving grace was in danger of being perverted into a moralism based on common sense. It is significant that again and again, whenever the Biblical Gospel is re-discovered—as, above all, at the Reformation, this is due to the influence of Augustine." Brunner, Creation and Redemption, p. 114. Augustine showed the dangers of Pelagian moralism and upheld the Biblical notion that sin involves the whole man not just some external actions, thus demonstrating that the root issue is the exclusive salvation of man by Christ. Cf. Hågglund, History of Theology, p. 137, and Lohse, Short History, p. 102. Cherbonnier writes, "He pointed out the lovelessness of a scheme in which each individual concentrates on establishing his own perfection. He was quick to discern the demon of self-righteousness and spiritual pride waiting at the top of the ladder of moral achievement. He saw that a definition of righteousness in terms of what the individual could do for himself diverts attention from that aspect of his behavior which is beyond his immediate control: his motives." Cherbonnier, Hardness of Heart, p. 86.

Brunner has pointed out four major contributions of Augustine's doctrine of original sin for the Christian understanding of the radical nature of sin as: "(1) the universality and the totality of sin; (2) the non posse non peccare as the state of unredeemed man; (3) the incapacity of man to

A brief summary of Williams' concise delineation of the major notions of Augustinianism serves to represent the model here for future comparison:¹

acquire merit in God's sight or even the grace of God; and (4) the perception of the truth that in the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ we are concerned first of all with the removal of guilt." Brunner, *Creation and Redemption*, p. 114. Cf. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, 1:90-91. On the negative side, Brunner has also listed those aspects of the Augustinian form of the doctrine that have created serious problems throughout church history and particularly for the modern mind: "(i) His doctrine of Original Sin, which made sin a fatality due to natural causes, and thus transferred the idea of sin from the sphere of responsible existence into that of natural existence. (ii) His doctrine of Original Sin was directly connected with his doctrine of sexual concupiscence as the 'primal' sin and of sexual procreation as the source of sin in every human being, above all in that of the newborn child. (iii) His theory of inherited sin (Erb-sünde) has obscured the truth of the nature of sin as disobedience to God. (iv) His argument for Infant Baptism has eliminated the Biblical, personal view of sin by the introduction of alien ideas." Brunner, *Creation and Redemption*, p. 115. In these four respects Augustine clearly went beyond the testimony of Scripture. For this he sustained the accusation of maintaining a Manichaeic (or at least Neo-Platonic) bias toward the flesh, among his Pelagian antagonists, and the consensus of the church has found it impossible to accept him across the board. The East never did accept his view and the Reformers only accepted it restrictively. While Pelagius suffered the condemnation of several church councils, Augustine was still only a partial victor. Cherbonnier has summed up the outcome from a modern, Biblical perspective: "Historically, Augustinianism never has won a clear cut victory on the level of reasoned argument. In Augustine's own time, its triumph was only achieved by the civil government's active suppression of Pelagians. Nevertheless, since, in the absence of Augustine and Pelagius, the former's triumph was certainly fortunate. Pelagius's superficial analysis would have undercut the very foundations of Christianity. . . . Within the thought of the Reformers, and especially of Augustine there are redeeming strains of genuinely Biblical thinking. It is these which, when disentangled from the web of pre-Christian ideas in which they are enmeshed, provide the basis for a fresh beginning in theology today." Cherbonnier, *Hardness of Heart*, pp. 98-99. Williams summarizes Augustine's contribution as (1) "Original righteousness," (2) "Original sin" as vitium, and (3) "Original sin" as reatus. He suggests that only the second is of any worth to the modern mind on the subject, though not to the extremes Augustine went. The other two are simply absurd and unacceptable to him. The first goes far beyond the Scriptural record, the third is simply impossible to accept in that no one could be held personally accountable and punishable for a sin committed by a person millennia before. Such a concept denies man's innate view of justice. See Williams, *Ideas of the Fall*, pp. 380-384. For further study see Lohse, *Short History*, pp. 113-114, and Lehmann, "The Anti-Pelagian Writings," p. 308.

¹Ideas of the Fall, p. 400.

1. There is in this Augustinian model an emphasis on the superior and ethereal nature of Adam's original condition: "Original righteousness and perfection."

2. Augustine's view included "the infinite malice of the first sin," that is, a hopelessness of deliverance for man aside from divine intervention, in reality, "ethical suicide."

3. In this view original sin is considered a vitium in which concupiscence rules fallen man.

4. Original sin is to be viewed as reatus (guilt) and is an intrinsic part of every descendant of Adam due to a seminal identity with the first parent.

5. Original sin is transmitted much like a disease and the act of procreation is the vehicle, being in itself intrinsically sinful because of the accompanying concupiscence.

6. Free-will is essentially gone, though Augustine does maintain free-will in name.

7. God is justified in damning all who are found in original sin, including infants, since responsibility for this situation lies with Adam (man). Predestination is thus a merciful act of God's grace and is not to be considered as arbitrary on God's part.

From Augustine to Trent

Having observed the development of the doctrine of original sin in Western theology to its fullest extreme through to the time of Augustine, and the full denial of such in Pelagianism, it is now possible to move more rapidly to modern times.

While the church condemned Pelagius, Coelestius, and Julian,¹ it did not entirely endorse Augustine, and there arose a reaction to both extremes in the Semi-Pelagian movement which sought to mediate between the two schools of thought. In some ways the Semi-Pelagians admired Augustine, but they modified his view on guilt and rejected his view on predestination.² The emphasis was upon the "weak will" and the "diseased" nature resulting from Adam's sin, rather than the mortified will of Augustine. Thus a greater stress was placed on cooperation.

Sin is inherited from Adam insofar as the entire human race participates in his transgression. Because of this, man cannot be saved or live a virtuous life without the help of grace. But the seed of good, which need only be brought alive by grace, are present in human life. By the exercise of free will, man can either reject grace or pursue it. When man is converted it is sometimes God who takes the initiative, but on other occasions He waits for us to decide, so that our will anticipates God's will. . . . Conversion and regeneration result from the cooperation of grace and free will.³

This synergism shifted the theological concerns from original sin to the operations of grace and essentially put the doctrine of sin on the back burner of presupposition or a priori.⁴

¹The historical data on the Pelagian controversy is outside the scope of this project, thus it is sufficient here to give only the briefest account of the church's response. Pelagius was excommunicated and subsequently disappeared from the scene after his final condemnation in 418. Coelestius continued the battle and suffered excommunication also, for the final time at Ephesus in 431. For details surrounding these excommunications see Lohse, Short History, pp. 118-121, and Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Pelagianism." The Canons on Sin and Grace from the Council of Carthage (A.D. 417-418) reflect the concepts condemned in Coelestius' Pelagianism. See Henry Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, trans. Roy J. Defarrari (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1957), 101-108, 109a [pp. 44-48], and Henry Bettenson, ed., Documents of the Christian Church, 2d ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 59.

²Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:207; Håggglund, History of Theology, p. 143. Cf. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 397.

³Håggglund, History of Theology, p. 144.

⁴Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 397.

The chief architect of this movement was John Cassian (360-435), the Abbot of Massilia (Marseilles) in Gaul, who, while maintaining an Augustinian view that man is inherently evil (depraved), also insisted that man could live morally upright.¹ He denied irresistible grace and predestination,² insisted that good works do not constitute saving works and yet taught that by the work of grace man could take the first step in his recovery from the disease of sin.³

Other leading proponents of this synthesis included Faustus of Rhegium (c.408-c.490) and Gennadius of Massilia (d.496). The former mitigated Augustine's view much the same as Cassian had, suggesting that in spite of the original sin incurred from Adam, man had not lost his freedom. Seeberg expresses Faustus' synergism as follows: "The word 'assistance' implies equally two (persons), one working and the other co-working, one seeking and the other promising, one knocking and the other opening, one asking and the other rewarding."⁴ Thus in Semi-Pelagianism one can see what Brunner has called "a weak compromise" in which the "most dangerous elements" of Pelagianism and Augustinianism, namely, original guilt and will-as-grace are welded together into a new system.⁵

Semi-Pelagianism as a compromise was condemned in the canons of the Second Council of Orange (529) and in its place was substituted an

¹Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 143-144. See also Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v., "John Cassian."

²Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 144.

³Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 1:99.

⁴Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:375.

⁵Brunner, Creation and Redemption, p. 115. Cf. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 1:375, 380-381.

alternative modified Augustinianism which omitted predestination¹ and stopped short of affirming original guilt.² Curiously, Orange employed Semi-Pelagian terminology:

Through the sin of the first man, free choice was so warped and weakened that thereafter no one is able to love God as he ought, or believe in God, or do anything for God that is good, except the grace of God's mercy prevent [precede] him.³

In spite of its official condemnation of this teaching, the church gradually settled into a posture, with regard to soteriology and hamartiology, that has been rightly termed Semi-Pelagian. This development is undoubtedly due in part to various theologians' attempts to adjust some of the more objectionable features that contributed to the inadequacy of Augustine's doctrine. The process can be traced through several of the great Catholic theologians of the middle ages and finally be found to culminate in the Tridentine canons, though the question is still debated.⁴ Gregory the Great (560-605) serves as a representative of the church in this respect with his Augustinian-sounding theological vocabulary in an overall semi-Pelagian posture.⁵ The Western church continued to be dominated by Augustinianism after Orange, but it showed little real interest in debating the issue outside the arena of the schools.⁶

¹See the Canons of the Council of Orange on Original Sin (D, 173b-200).

²Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 397.

³Bettenson, Documents of the Christian Church, p. 62 (D, 199). Cf. the Canons of Synod of Arles (473), *ibid.*, p. 60.

⁴Because it would not serve the overall purpose of this dissertation to devote a great deal of space on medieval theology, only a cursory treatment is given here.

⁵See Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:143, and Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:21.

⁶See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 397.

Various aspects of Augustinian hamartiology dominated the thought of such great theologians and schoolmen as Anselm (1033-1109), Peter Abelard [Abailard] (1079-1142), and Peter Lombard (1100-1160); the Franciscans Alexander of Hales (1186-1245), Bonaventura (1200-1274), John Duns Scotus (1265-1308), and William of Occam [Ockham] (c.1285-1347); and the Dominicans Albertus Magnus (1200-1280) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), as well as a host of lesser lights of the middle ages.¹

These theological aspects, some of which had only been suggested by Augustine, were presupposed, expounded upon, interpreted, or developed by these philosopher-theologians. And though their solving of serious Augustinian inadequacies from a Biblical or philosophical point of view were not overly successful, there were trends in modification that now appear somewhat modern in their mitigating effect. Particularly was this true with regard to depravity and judgment of unbaptized infants and pagans.

Three Augustinian suggestions in particular, developed during this period, seemed of peculiar significance to these theologians: (1) The suggestion that sin was non-existence (absentia, or defectus boni), or a non-entity—a Neo-Platonic notion largely developed in his writings due in part to his anti-Pelagian emphasis on depravity; (2) The concept of the golden age and the pre-Fall nature of Adam—a view that was reasserted in Anselm and gradually developed into a full-fledged medieval theology of Original Righteousness as donum superadditum;² (3) The somewhat nervously ventured

¹For a more thorough discussion of these see Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:114-124; Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, pp. 141-174; and Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 395-423.

²Note William Hordern's definition of this concept: "The concept donum superadditum (supernatural or additional endowment), suggested by Athanasius and most fully developed by Aquinas, distinguishes between certain natural endowments that man has from God and which he retains after the fall and the supernatural or additional endowments which he lost

suggestion that infants are as deserving of eternal damnation as actual sinners—a view on which Augustine himself fluctuated.¹

Anselm of Canterbury serves as a link between Augustine and later theologians. In his major contribution to the subject, The Virgin Conception and Original Sin, Anselm postulates an important connection between Christology and hamartiology by asserting that Christ's incarnation cannot be grasped until one comprehends the nature of original ("natural") sin ("how God took human nature without sin, from the sinful mass of the human race").² Having stated this primary concern, Anselm launched into an essentially Augustinian argument.

Surely, it cannot be denied that infants existed in Adam when he sinned. But they existed in him causally or materially as in a seed, and they exist personally in themselves, because in him they were the seed itself, in themselves they are individually distinct persons. In him, they were not distinct from him; in themselves, they are distinct from him. In him they were himself; in their own persons, they are themselves. They existed in him, therefore, but not as themselves, since they did not yet exist as themselves.³

Original sin was a sin of nature, one which all men inherited from their first parent. Adam represented the whole of human nature and by

in the fall. The donum superadditum included the powers that enabled man to know God, to live according to God's will and thus to retain immortal life. When these powers were lost in the fall, man's natural powers of reason, conscience, etc., were weakened but not destroyed. As such they are the image of God within fallen man. Fallen man thus still has the power to practice the natural virtues of prudence, justice, courage and self-control but he has lost the ability to attain a vision of God or to live the Christian virtues of faith, hope and love. Fallen man can regain these lost abilities only through the grace that comes to him through the sacraments of the church." Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Donum Superadditum," by William Hordern. Cf. Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, pp. 162-164.

¹At times Augustine referred to infant punishment as "the mildest condemnation of all," but later he appeared to have stood by the notion. On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sin 1.21 (NPNF, 5:23). Cf. Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 377-378.

²Virgin Conception 1 (C, 169).

³Ibid. 23 (C, 199).

sinning vitiated the race, i.e., handed on the tendency to sin.¹ Man did not personally commit Adam's sin but because he was in Adam's seed, that is, his unindividualized nature was present in Adam, "it became a necessity that we should sin when we did exist."² Personal sin, on the other hand, was the designation for sin which man commits "after he has become a person distinct from other persons."³ The Fall both polluted human nature and made it guilty.⁴

The suggestion of personal justice or righteousness in both nature and personal gift developed, in the medieval schoolmen, into the fuller view of donum superadditum where original sin came to be seen as a result of the loss of this supernaturally added gift. Both the loss of justice and the loss of holiness (as evidenced in the weakened state of corruption) demanded satisfaction for Anselm, hence his doctrine of satisfaction-atonement fits his notion of original sin.⁵

¹Ibid. 2.

²Ibid. 7 (C,180).

³Ibid. 1 (C, 170).

⁴Ibid.: "What is contracted in his very origin is called 'original,' and it can also be called 'natural,' not in the sense that it arises from the essence of the nature, but because, due to the nature's corruptness, it is received with the nature. On the other hand, the sin which anyone commits after he is a person can be called 'personal,' because it occurs by the fault of a person. In a similar sense, we can speak of 'original' and 'personal' justice. For example, Adam and Eve were in a state of justice 'originally,' that is, right in the very beginning of their existence as human beings, without any lapse of time. Justice can be called 'personal,' however, when a person without justice receives the justice he did not possess from the beginning."

⁵Ibid. 10, 22. See Aulén, Christus Victor, pp. 81-100, and Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, pp. 147-155. Moxon takes incisive exception with Anselm but it is significant that his critique is also aimed at the satisfaction theory of the atonement, namely, that modern man no longer thinks of justice in terms of satisfaction. Furthermore, the whole scheme is inadequate for Moxon because of Anselm's literal interpretation of the Fall as recorded in Genesis. "If the historical existence of Adam and Eve be denied and

A second Augustinian suggestion to be stressed by Anselm was the position on sin as nothingness, or non-being.¹

Evil is nothing but the absence of due goodness. For any essence, being evil means nothing but lacking goodness which it ought to have.²

Development of this Neo-Platonic concept was a significant turning point in the doctrine's formulation³ and would now grow and find itself a natural concomitant to the revival of Greek philosophical categories as the medieval vehicles of Christian theology, especially witnessed in the thought of Thomas Aquinas.

A third important trend in Anselm was the easing of the Augustinian judgment against infants. Augustine had mentioned that infants were in some way less responsible than those who added to their original sin the deeds of actual sin. According to Anselm an infant received original sin as soon as it has a rational soul but then added to that original sin his own personal sin.⁴ Thus infants lack blessedness—a lack which only the

the doctrine of the Fall (literally interpreted) be rejected [which Moxon would do], then the whole of Anselm's theory of Original and transmitted Sin falls to the ground." Ibid., p. 149. If this is true then the implication is that the converse would also be true, namely, that if Anselm's literal view of Scripture is correct, then his view of original sin and atonement as satisfaction would be acceptable as a Scripturally consistent view.

¹Virgin Conception 5.

²Ibid. (C, 178).

³Vandervelde, Original Sin, p. 27: "It is significant to note that, despite his negative definition of original sin, Anselm derives this definition not so much by speculation regarding 'paradise lost,' as by reflection upon the notion of sin. Because all sin is injustice, Anselm argues, and original sin is strictly sin (originale peccatum est absolute peccatum), the latter is nothing other than iniustitia, which is condemnable before God. From this notion of sin as injustice Anselm proceeds to specify the unique nature of original sin as the absence of the justice that we ought to (debere—debitum) have, namely, by way of Adam."

⁴Virgin Conception 3.

satisfaction of Christ could remedy and which was to be applied through infant baptism.¹

Anselm's role is transitional² but what is significant is the continuing trend of Christian theology to soften the harsher components of Augustinianism. This is seen in Anselm's critic, Peter Abelard (1079-1142), who viewed the effects of Adam's sin not as inherited guilt but as inherited penalty. While the corruption of man's will was a result of the Fall and led Adam's descendants into actual sin, it did not in itself constitute sin.³ Abelard saw sin as a contempt for God and placed the emphasis on intention rather than on deeds.⁴ This view of sin had logical consequences for the traditional views of the atonement (the patristic ransom view and the Anselmian satisfaction theory), both of which he rejected.⁵ His alternative view, the subjective theory of the atonement, and precursor to the modern "moral influence theory," asserted that the atonement was an example of God's love for man in Christ and neither required nor allowed for the harsher Augustinian or Anselmic concepts.⁶

¹Ibid., 29. For further summary on the following themes of hamartiology see *ibid.*, on original justice (1), the nature of sin, both actual and original (3, 5, 15, 20, 22, 24, 27), the transmission of sin (25, 26), and infants and baptism (28, 29).

²Vandervelde, Original Sin, p. 28: "Although fed by the mainstream of the Augustinian conception of man in sin and undergirded by philosophic realism, Anselm's definition of original sin marks the point of transition towards a purely negative understanding of original sin. This transition is facilitated by the increasingly clearer distinction that is made between the reality of nature and that of grace."

³Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 2:171.

⁴Ibid. Cf. Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v., "Abelard."

⁵Aulén, Christus Victor, pp. 95-97.

⁶As a result, the moral influence theory of the atonement has historically minimized the concept of justice or the forensic aspects of

Thomas Aquinas represents the Dominican form of Augustinian hamartiology in high scholasticism. Like Anselm he struggled with theodicy and sought a rational explanation for evil. His Aristotelian philosophical structure aided him in stressing some of Augustine's undeveloped thoughts mentioned above. By way of the two philosophical planes, i.e., the natural and the supernatural, Thomas laid stress on a view of sin as defectus originalis. From Augustine he preserved man's original state as "the supernatural splendors of 'original perfection,' with its perfect sanctity and its mighty intellectual powers" and also took a more optimistic view of man.¹ Adam's Fall caused man to drop from the spiritual plane to the natural plane and to suffer the disease of sin,² as evidenced in his disordered condition (vulneratio naturae, dispositio inordinata).^{3,4}

the atonement. Tennant has implied that the Abelardian approach to original sin is perhaps the most divergent view of the middle ages. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin."

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 401. Thomas maintained much of Augustine's terminology but gave it new meaning. Vandervelde has pointed out how Aquinas married Augustine and Anselm, beginning with the concupiscence of the former and ending up with the negative definition of the latter. First, he shifts the focal point of the doctrine "from man's enslavement in sin and God's redeeming mercy, to the reality of supernatural grace and the (disastrous) effect of its loss upon human nature." Because of this shift the moral qualification of concupiscence is lost and man's nature becomes "disordered" rather than contaminated, and finally concupiscence ceases to be positive. See Vandervelde, Original Sin, pp. 28-32.

²Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 401-402.

³For Thomas' treatment of original sin see his Summa Theologiae 1-2.82-84. Cf. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin," by F. R. Tennant.

⁴Etienne Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 339: "His [man's] will has been wounded by Original Sin with a consequent disordering of his concupiscence which no longer allows him to act always as his reason prescribes. . . . Without Original Sin our will would be naturally capable of complying with the orders issued by our reason. But this is no longer the case. Here, then, we have our reason for the weakness of any natural moral virtue not informed by charity."

Building a more extreme view of "original righteousness" as a donum superadditum also gave Thomas a chance to modify the original guilt notion of Augustine.¹ When man rebelled he lost that gift but remained on the natural level in a disordered nature, a less harsh condition than the old Augustinianism had proffered.² Guilt was still involved but Adam was more a prime mover in relation to the human phenomenon of sin than simply the hopeless polluter.³ This view had the unique effect of preserving the concept while softening the blow. Sin, once in motion, needed another force to stop it—Jesus Christ, to be exact. Infant baptism remained necessary and Augustinianism was essentially preserved—if not in depth at least in word.

Another area of Thomas' softening is found in his treatment of infant punishment. Augustine had insisted on eternal punishment for all unbaptized humanity outside the election of God. In Thomas this view is modified by his doctrine of Limbo. Limbo did not constitute punishment in terms of torment; it was rather an existence, on the natural plane, a resulting of losing or failing to receive saving knowledge and in which the beatific vision was impossible.⁴

The Franciscan order stressed personal spirituality, service, and poverty, after the example of its founder Francis of Assisi (1181-1226). This undoubtedly contributed to its stronger Semi-Pelagian drift in its doctrine of grace and corresponding effect on the doctrine of sin. John Duns

¹See Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 400-401.

²Summa Theologiae 1-2.82.1, 3.

³Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 403-404.

⁴Ibid., pp. 405-408. The beatific vision was a direct knowledge of God. For comparison of Thomas with Platonic thought on this, see Bewkes et.al., The Western Heritage, pp. 466-468.

Scotus held an anthropology which was almost pre-Augustinian, harking back in several respects to the early view of a neutral man, one created as analogous to "infancy."¹ His concept of donum superadditum was also developed to the point that original sin was but a lack of original righteousness, the gift that God had graciously bestowed on Adam. It resided in the will and thus did not corrupt the whole man.² In common with the majority of his contemporaries, Duns held to the creationist theory of the soul's origin and found it difficult to see the strict Augustinian view of seminal identity.³ His view of original sin as simply a debt to be paid to God demonstrated a major concession of the fundamental principle in the Augustinian doctrine.⁴

William of Occam saw original sin not as a radical corruption of man's nature but as God's judgment on man and wrote of sin as fomes—"an inclination in man to do what is evil."⁵ Occam separated act from nature and moved significantly closer to a Pelagian posture which insisted that man could, of his own power, produce meritum de congruo (merit of a lower order), once he had been rewarded by gifts of grace for doing all he could.⁶

If generalizations are allowable one could say that the Western scholastics tended to make their contributions along practical lines.⁷ Their

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 408-419.

²See Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:153.

³Williams, Ideas of the Fall, pp. 412-413.

⁴Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:153-154.

⁵Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 200.

⁶Ibid. See further Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:303-304, 321ff.

⁷Ibid., 1:288.

theology preserved the sacramentalism of the church, they tended to emphasize Semi-Pelagian views of justification, and they downplayed the harsher elements of Augustinian hamartiology such as original guilt, total depravity, and eternal punishment of those who have not participated in actual sin. Original sin became something negative, a lack of original righteousness.¹ The on-going debate between the Dominicans and the Franciscans saw the latter more firmly devoted to Semi-Pelagian notions of grace, sin, and merit-oriented spirituality, and the former, especially in the theology of Thomas, preserving a Semi-Augustinian anthropological heritage (with modifications that allowed for synergistic tendencies as well).²

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) decree on original sin represents the official dogma of the Roman Catholic Church, and as such it is the Church's most comprehensive and authoritative statement on the subject. It is largely a summation of the position stated above as typical of the middle ages.³

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³In spite of its importance the Tridentine statement is widely recognized as descriptive, compromising, and apologetic, rather than analytical and definitive, with regard to the nature of original sin. Vandervelde writes, "To prevent this internal discord from interfering with the proceedings of the Council, the papal legates instructed the conciliar theologians to determine the nature of original sin, not by definition, but by describing its effects." Original Sin, p. 33. Tennant sees the Tridentine decree as essentially the acceptance of Aquinas' doctrine. See Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, s.v. "Original Sin." Williams, on the other hand, insists it is a Scotist position, "with one unassimilated fragment of pure Augustinianism, namely, the conception of original guilt, adhering awkwardly to it." Ideas of the Fall, p. 421. Regardless of which opinion is right, the decree is clearly a result of medieval adjustment of the Augustinian position. The turmoil surrounding the Council, and particularly this subject, included disagreement on the nature of original sin among Catholic theologians who lined up behind Augustine, Anselm, or Aquinas, or who found themselves defending a position held by their peculiar order (Dominican, Franciscan, Jesuit). In addition to this there was the greater threat of the Protestant Reformation and its divergent assertions to be found in Luther,

The decree on original sin¹ (Session 5, June 17, 1546),² was presented in six canons, the first five of which are relevant to this study. The

Calvin, and Zwingli, as well as the more humanist voices of Erasmus and Pighius. Cf. Henri Rondet, Original Sin: The Patristic and Theological Background, trans. Cajetan Finegan (Shannon, Ireland: Ecclesia, 1972), pp. 169-174; and Anthony T. Padavano, Original Sin and Christian Anthropology (Washington: Corpus, 1969), p. 23. Albert Pighius (c.1490-1542) held a view similar to the later Federalist view that Adam's sin was immediately imputed to his posterity and they are thereby constituted guilty on account of that sin. John Murray, The Imputation of Adam's Sin (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959), pp. 12-13.

¹This decree can be found in D, 787-792.

²The following is a brief summary of the first five canons on original sin: Canon 1 dealt with the position of Adam at creation in paradise. When he sinned he "lost his holiness and the justice in which he had been established." Such an action incurred the wrath of God and "hence the death with which God had previously threatened him." At this sin Adam was "transformed in body and soul for the worse." The statement is largely a reiteration of the Council of Orange, aimed at the Semi-Pelagians. Moxon maintains that this article, while fighting Semi-Pelagianism, is actually propagating it. See Doctrine of Sin, p. 163. Man's will is free when "moved and aroused by God," and cooperates to obtain justification.

Canon 2 was also borrowed largely from Orange and asserted that Adam did not harm himself alone. On the contrary, he lost the "sanctity and justice" which he had received from God. This loss resulted in punishment of the "whole human race" in death "of the soul." As with Orange, this Tridentine decree appealed to Rom 5:12 for support. It was not aimed at the exaggerated views of the Reformers but at what was considered neo-Pelagian views or humanistic tendencies of Zwingli and Erasmus. See Rondet, Original Sin, p. 174.

Canon 3 dealt with the transmission of Adam's sin and asserted that this transmission was by propagation not by imitation and that its solution was to be found in the merit of the "one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ." Furthermore, this merit was applied to mankind, both adults and infants, by the sacrament of baptism. The intention was clearly to anathematize views that deny transmission altogether (Pelagians) and those which deny the necessity of infant baptism (Anabaptists). Cf. Rondet, Original Sin, pp. 174-175.

Canon 4 was concerned with infant baptism and its necessity in remitting original sin. Infant baptism was said to be for the washing away of contagion by regeneration, "what they have contracted by generation." Even though infants could not commit actual sin they were still involved in original guilt. There is little doubt that this statement was to answer the Anabaptists, Zwingli, and Calvin. See Padavano, Original Sin and Christian Anthropology, p. 23: "It declares that infant baptism is unto the remission of sins and, with Calvin clearly in mind, insists that the newly-born, even of baptized parents, are guilty of original sin."

Finally, Canon 5 reaffirmed the transmission of hereditary guilt but that in a person who was baptized this guilt was no longer present.

positioning of these canons immediately before the statement on justification gives an indication of the Council Fathers' opinion that original sin was foundational for the former doctrine (a view also held by Protestants.¹ The decree was aimed specifically at Lutheran assertions that original sin was radical depravity and at the Anabaptist position on adult baptism,² and it began with an introduction of three canons that were essentially repetitions of previous Councils' decisions.³

Summary

The medieval Catholic/Tridentine model of original sin can be summarized as follows:

Rather, by baptism, they are "made innocent, immaculate, pure, guiltless and beloved sons of God." This canon further affirmed that while there remained in the baptized a "concupiscence of an inclination" that was a tendency to sin and a propensity with which a person must struggle, yet was not to be called sin, (even though it is something that "at times the Apostle [Paul] calls sin)." Rom 6:12ff. It was rather to be understood as "from sin and inclines to sin." This view was clearly aimed at Luther who held to the notion of simul justus et peccator, and is a logical development from the Semi-Pelagian view of the will adopted at Trent. Cf. Rondet, Original Sin, p. 175. Moxon traces this view from the Semi-Pelagians to Duns Scotus to Zwingli to the Arminians. See Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, pp. 164-165.

¹Burke, "Man without Christ," p. 4.

²Ibid., p 14.

³The fifth session decisions have brought the charge of Semi-Pelagianism, but such a shift can also be seen in the Decree on Justification made in Session 6. Note the following: (1) Session 6 Canon 4: "If anyone says that man's free will moved and aroused by God, by assenting to God's call and action, in no way cooperates toward disposing and preparing itself to obtain the grace of justificaition, that it cannot refuse its assent if it wishes, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive, let him be anathema." (2) Session 6, Canon 5: "If anyone says that after the sin of Adam man's free will was lost and destroyed, or that it is a thing only in name, indeed a name without a reality, a fiction introduced into the Church by Satan, let him be anathema." (3) Session 6, Canon 9: "If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema."

1. When man fell he lost his original righteousness.¹
2. In Adam mankind was affected in that all mankind became sinful and subject to death. Without the salvific work of Christ there would be no remedy for this condition.
3. Original sin is spread to the human race from Adam by propagation and not by imitation, though this is not to be conceived of as total depravity.²
4. Original sin as guilt is removed (remitted) by baptism rightly administered by the church.
5. Concupiscence may be defined as an inclination toward sin but it is not depravity, nor is it properly called sin, and it remains after baptism to be struggled with by the believer (though the believer is free from the guilt of original sin).³

The Reformation and Its Confessions

The Protestant Reformers of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions sought to return to what they considered a more solid Biblical foundation for the doctrine of original sin.⁴ It was their intense concern for Scripture

¹Post-Tridentine theology interpreted "original righteousness" as a superadded gift and thus not a part of the original constitution of man. This was denied by the Reformers and considered a Semi-Pelagian adjustment to Augustine. See Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 164.

²Since Adam's sin merely stripped away the original righteousness that God had super-added to him after his creation, original sin was not considered sin. Moxon suggests, "Thus they changed Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin into a doctrine of Original Evil." *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³The tension in the Tridentine canons is apparent. While the Council was holding the line between Pelagianism and the Protestant Reformers, it was also upholding the mitigating efforts and conclusions of the medieval Catholic scholastics which to a large degree can be classified as Semi-Pelagian.

⁴This took the form of Augustinian doctrine which also had predestination, as a metaphysical determinism, attached to it. Brunner

that tempered the Reformers' reception of the elements of their doctrine.¹ Original sin was seen as a hereditary depravity and corruption of human nature. Concupiscence was understood from the viewpoint of wrong existence rather than sexual lust. Inclination to sin was interpreted as properly called sin and man was viewed as totally dependent upon God for his righteousness and salvation.²

The Lutheran Tradition

Martin Luther (1483-1546) essentially restored the Augustinian doctrine of original sin in his attempt to do justice to what he considered to be the primitive Biblical position on the subject.³

summarizes: "The Reformers take over from Augustine those four important elements which I have just enumerated: the universality and the totality of sin; the non posse non peccare; the impossibility of acquiring merit; and the central significance of guilt; although they emphasize the last point more strongly than Augustine. But they also adopted the whole Augustinian doctrine of the Fall and of Original Sin; although in so doing the personalist and theocentric elements continually break through the traditional forms of the doctrine." Creation and Redemption, pp. 115-116. In regard to this Williams observes: "We are at this stage of our enquiry brought face to face with a colossal recrudescence of the rigidly 'twice-born' anthropology, combined with a remorseless accentuation of all its sternest lineaments—a process which has given birth to that puritan doctrine of original sin still so largely believed to be the primitive, Christian, and biblical doctrine." Ideas of the Fall, p. 424. Williams attributes the return to Augustinian emphases both to historical and psychological factors, speculating on similarities between Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Calvin, with regard to personality and temperament. He even suggested that (ibid., p. 426) "it is not too much to claim that temperament alone would have guided the great Reformers into the paths of a severe and gloomy anthropology, even had they not been intellectual heirs of mediaeval theology, with its overwhelming tradition of the African Doctor's immemorial authority." Cf. ibid., pp. 424-427. Such a conclusion is perhaps extreme, but the existential situations of the four men surely seem to have been a tempering factor in their theology.

¹Moxon, Doctrine of Sin, p. 166.

²See further Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 230.

³Luther made adjustments in the doctrine that were largely reversals of the medieval trend of softening the Bishop of Hippo's views and he emphasized those elements which were in many ways the most difficult to handle, such as: root sin as inherited guilt, concupiscence as real sin, the

In his infralapsarianism,¹ Luther held that God was not the author of evil just because he had allowed it to occur.² Double predestination was a natural, although perhaps not necessary, outcome of his original sin doctrine. He ever hid its reasons and explanation in the mysterious will of God.³ Luther started from the premise that man was created holy and perfect, originally righteous, that is to say, in correct relationship to God.⁴ To Luther, the medieval view lowered the seriousness of the Fall. He held to the view that holiness and righteousness were both part of the original

bondage of the will, and that notion of predestination found so unacceptable at Orange. Luther pressed these hitherto offensive elements into a forceful neo-Augustinian position, sometimes going even beyond Augustine. His reason for doing this was not to restore Augustine per se but to do justice to the Scripture record. Luther wrote, "I would not believe St. Augustine if St. Paul did not support him." Argument in Defense of Articles of Martin Luther 2, (WL, 3:34). Cf. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:243.

¹Infralapsarianism is the form of predestinarian doctrine which holds that "God created man with the possibility of the Fall, which happened, and then elected some men to salvation, leaving the rest in enmity with God. At issue is the logical order of the decree, not the chronological (since God, as eternal, is outside time)." The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church. s.v., "Sublapsarianism," by Dick Jellema.

²Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:335-336. For a discussion of Luther's reasoning regarding the origin of sin see Paul Althaus, The Theology of Martin Luther, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 158-159. Cf. Williams' suggestion that Melancthon, Calvin, and Zwingli appeared to attribute sin to God. See f. 2, p. 435, and fs. 1-2, p. 436, in Ideas of the Fall.

³As Landeen points out, "This at once excludes debate on the doctrine. For man cannot inquire into the dreadful hidden will of God but can only reverently adore it, 'for the most awesome secret of the Divine Majesty' keeps it wholly 'to Himself and forbids us to know it.'" William Landeen, Martin Luther's Religious Thought (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1971), p. 133. In his On the Bondage of the Will (LCC, 17:200-201), Luther stated a principle to which he had consistent recourse: "To the extent, therefore, that God hides himself and wills to be unknown to us, . . . For here the saying truly applies, 'Things above us are no business of ours.' . . . God must therefore be left to himself in his own majesty, for in this regard we have nothing to do with him, nor has he willed that we should have anything to do with him."

⁴Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 230-231. This is not to be understood in the scholastic sense of donum superadditum.

constitution of man, not something added later.¹ This emphasis on relationship was crucial to Luther's understanding of what happened at the Fall. When man became a massa perditionis, through Adam (in Adam), he did not merely misuse his powers, he broke a relational existence with God, the consequence of which was not simply to bring man down to the natural level (as in scholasticism), but actually to drop him to a sub-natural level.² It was in Adam's disobedience that "all men were made sinners and became subject to death and to the devil."³

At the root of Adam's sin was egocentricity, pride, and doubting which led to unbelief.⁴ The alienation that resulted produced an evil that

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall, p. 427.

²Ibid. Cf. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:242ff., and Håggglund, History of Theology, pp. 230-231.

³Luther lists his differences of opinion with the scholastic view of sin in his Smalcald Articles, a concise statement of his doctrine written in 1537. The following views he considered "error and stupidity": "1. That after the fall of Adam the natural powers of man have remained whole and uncorrupted, and that man by nature possesses a right understanding and a good will, as the philosophers teach. 2. Again, that man has a free will, either to do good and refrain from evil or to refrain from good and do evil. 3. Again, that man is able by his natural powers to observe and keep all the commandments of God. 4. Again, that man is able by his natural powers to love God above all things and his neighbor as himself. 5. Again, if man does what he can, God is certain to grant him his grace. 6. Again, when a man goes to the sacrament there is no need of a good intention to do what he ought, but it is enough that he does not have an evil intention to commit sin, for such is the goodness of man's nature and such is the power of the sacrament. 7. That it cannot be proved from Scriptures that the Holy Spirit and his gifts are necessary for the performance of a good work." See the Smalcald Articles 3.1 (BC, 302-303). These are ideas stemming from ignorance, Luther wrote, "thoroughly pagan" and not to be tolerated. "If such teachings were true, Christ would have died in vain, for there would be no defect or sin in man for which he would have had to die, or else he would have died only for the body and not for the soul inasmuch as the soul would be sound and only the body would be subject to death." Such is the central position his doctrine of original sin holds in his anthropology and soteriology.

⁴Håggglund, History of Theology, pp. 229-230. For a thorough presentation of Luther's view of sin see Althaus, Theology of Martin Luther, pp. 141-160.

affected the will of man. Where before the Fall man had been believing and inclined to good, he became rebellious and corrupt, subject to death and to the devil.¹ Born was the "old man," who was blind and wicked, despising of God, with inborn impurity of heart, disobedient to the will of God and unbelieving by nature.² All of this stemmed from the basic sin of unbelief, "turning away from God."³ Man is now curvus (crooked), and curvatus in se (ultimately bent back upon himself).⁴ Since the Fall of Adam he is by nature a self-seeking creature.⁵ In the light of this, concupiscence took on a different quality for Luther than for Augustine: rather than sexual desire, egocentricity became the polluting root in man.⁶

Peccatum originale was not simply a physical ailment but something that was deeply wrong with man's relationship to God, a genuine corruptio of his entire person because of his separation.⁷ Luther called this "personal sin" or the "sin of the person," in order to depict the fact that it was total

¹Smalcald Articles 3.1.

²For several statements of Luther on this, see Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:242-243.

³Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 229.

⁴Smalcald Articles 3.1 (BC, 302): "The fruits of this sin [Adam's sin] are all the subsequent evil deeds which are forbidden in the Ten Commandments, such as unbelief, false belief, idolatry, being without the fear of God, presumption, despair, blindness—in short, ignorance or disregard for God—and then also lying, swearing by God's name, failure to pray and call upon God, neglect of God's Word, disobedience to parents, murder, unchastity, theft and deceit, etc."

⁵Heick describes Luther's view: "Man can do nothing but seek only his own and love himself above all things. . . . Thus in what is good and virtuous man seeks himself, that is that he may please himself." Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:336.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Smalcald Articles 3.1 (BC, 302): "This hereditary sin [Erbsünde; peccatum haereditarium] is so deep a corruption of nature that reason cannot understand it."

in its effect on man's entire being.¹ "Flesh" was not an element in man, nor a tempter of man; rather man was flesh—Totum hominem esse carnem.² All actual sin (peccata actualia) proceeds naturally out of this "root-sin."³

With his radical view of original sin it was predictable that Luther would take an equally radical position on the bondage of the human will.⁴

¹Althaus, Theology of Martin Luther, pp. 157-158.

²See Bondage of the Will (LCC, 17:271ff). Cf. Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:48-50, and Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:336. Luther wrote: "Hence it is great wisdom to know that we are nothing but sin, so that we do not think of sin as lightly as do the pope's theologians, who define sin as 'anything said, done, or thought against the Law of God.' Define sin, rather, on the basis of this Psalm [51], as all that is born of father and mother, before a man is old enough to say, do, or think anything. From such a root nothing good before God can come forth." Quoted by Gonzalez in History of Christian Thought, 3:48, from Luther's Lectures on Psalms [chapter 51], (LW, 12:307).

³Smalcald Articles 3.1 (BC, 302): Through Adam's sin "all men were made sinners. . . . The fruits of this sin are all the subsequent evil deeds." Aulén, Faith of the Christian Church, p. 242: "This original sin, or the sin of nature, or the sin of the person, is the principal sin [for Luther]. If it did not exist, neither would there be any actual sins." For Luther, fallen man is not just prone to sin, he "absolutely does not love God, nor fervently hunger and thirst (for him), but thinks to find full satisfaction for mind and spirit in created things." Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:229. Original sin is an abiding sin, not to be viewed simply as a tendency, leaning, bent, or propensity, as the scholastics were wont to view it. Häggglund, remarks, "Original sin is not simply an inclination toward evil, attached to the lower spiritual powers (concupiscentia, fomes); it is the corruption of man in his entirety." Häggglund, History of Theology, pp. 230-231. Original sin has its seat in the will. It is malum absconditum, a hidden evil "which in a secret manner determines the shape of human existence." Ibid., p. 230. Consequently, the distinction between venial and mortal sin is erased—every sin is a mortal sin. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:242. Man is a sinner through and through, entirely corrupted having his perverted will to assist him in his doing of evil. Cf. Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:336-337; Häggglund, History of Theology, pp. 219, 225.

⁴This is especially seen in his debate with Erasmus. See Gordon Rupp and Philip S. Watson, eds. and trans., Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969). In his work, On the Bondage of the Will, Luther maintained the position that one's will is not free to cooperate with God with a view to one's salvation but was fully dependent upon God's predestination (LCC, 17:219ff). Watson summarizes the debate in these comments (ibid., p. 13): "The two men represent rather two different theological and ethical outlooks, two alternative ways

However, though man is incapable of turning to God by his own will, this does not preclude the doing of "civil righteousness" or works of the law,¹ but free choice is unable to come to faith and is in fact the opposite of faith. Man is free only to sin, not to repent² hence man is totally and

of 'thinking together' God and man." And (ibid., p. 14) "Erasmus thinks essentially along traditional Scholastic lines, while Luther does not. In spite of his well-known distaste for Scholastic subtleties, Erasmus presupposed the metaphysical dualism of 'nature' and 'supernature' on which all Scholastic thinking rests, and in terms of which the relation between man and God, human nature and divine grace, is construed. Luther, on the other hand, takes much more seriously a quite different dualism, namely, that of God and the devil. The significance of this can best be illustrated by contrasting his view of the basic human situation with that of the Schoolmen."

It should be noted that the habitus infusus of Occam was also unacceptable to Luther since any ascribing of natural ability to love God was a denial of the Gospel. Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 216-217.

¹Bondage of the Will (LCC, 17:302): "When he [Paul] condemns the works of the law themselves and makes them impious in the sight of God, it is clear that he is condemning all those whose strength lay in their zeal for the law and its works." Luther makes a distinction between works of law and works done in response to faith (ibid., pp. 302ff.).

²Ibid. The Formula of Concord (1577) took the Lutheran position: "We believe that in spiritual and divine things the intellect, heart, and will of unregenerated man cannot by any native or natural powers in any way understand, believe, accept, imagine, will, begin, accomplish, do, effect, or cooperate, but that man is entirely and completely dead and corrupted as far as anything good is concerned." Solid Declaration 2 (BC, 521). "For this reason the Holy Scriptures compare the heart of unregenerated man to a hard stone which resists rather than yields in any way to human touch, or to an unhewn timber, or to a wild, unbroken animal—not that man since the Fall is no longer a rational creature, or that he is converted to God without hearing and meditating upon the divine Word, or that in outward or external secular things he cannot have a conception of good or evil or freely choose to act, or not to act." Ibid., (BC, 524). Free will, as Erasmus understood it (the capacity to decide to accept or reject grace), does not exist for Luther. Watson summarizes Erasmus' view of free will as follows: "His [man's] reason and will may be 'wounded,' even 'corrupted,' but they are not destroyed. His passions, the lower ingredients of his nature, may be deeply disordered, so that he is a constant prey to carnality, yet he is not wholly carnal. His nature remains compounded as it always was of animal 'flesh' and that rational 'spirit' which is the mark of humanity, with the soul in between and capable of leaning toward either. Fallen man therefore still possesses some capacity for the knowledge of and obedience of God." Watson, Luther and Erasmus, pp. 15-16. Ibid., p. 16: "He [man] has in his will the power to 'apply himself to the things which lead to eternal salvation or to turn away from them.'" See also Hägglund, History of

absolutely dependent on God for salvation and renewal.

Luther was traducian in his view of human propagation and it followed that original sin was passed on through this natural means.¹ Original sin is Erbstunde, inherited sin.² While inherited guilt is implied from the imputation of an alienum peccatum, or alien sin, Luther's main concern was the effect of original sin on the human experience.³ Man is an entire sinner. He stresses human nature, not imputation of Adam's sin.⁴

Theology, p. 231, and Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:243. Bondage of the Will (LCC, 306): "If we are unaware of the sin in which we were born, in which we live, move, and have our being, or rather, which lives, moves, and reigns in us, how should we be aware of the righteousness that reigns outside of us in heaven?"

¹Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:335-336; Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 229-230.

²Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:229. Luther wrote, "A sinner can beget nothing but another sinner." Lectures on Romans [on Romans 5:12, LW, 25:302]. In his comments on Ps 51:5, Luther interpreted David's words to mean: "'The human seed, this mass from which I was formed, is totally corrupt with faults and sins. The material itself is faulty. The clay, so to speak, out of which this vessel began to be formed is damnable. . . . Our very conception, the very growth of the foetus in the womb, is sin, even before we are born and begin to be human beings.' Furthermore, he [David] is not talking about sin in marriage or about the sin of parents; as though he were accusing his parents of sin when he says, 'I was conceived in sin.' He is not saying, 'My mother sinned when she conceived me'; nor is he saying, 'I sinned when I was conceived.' He is talking about the unformed seed itself and declaring that it is full of sin and a mass of perdition. Thus the true and proper meaning is this: 'I am a sinner, not because I have committed adultery, nor because I have had Uriah murdered. But I have committed adultery and murder because I was born, indeed conceived and formed in the womb, as a sinner.' So we are not sinners because we commit this or that sin, but we commit them because we are sinners first. That is, a bad tree and bad seed also bring forth bad fruit, and from a bad root only a bad tree can grow." Selected Psalms 1 (LW, 12:347-348).

³Commenting on Rom 5:14, Luther wrote, "Sin is one thing and transgression is another; for sin remains as guilt, while transgression is an act which passes on. Thus all have not sinned in action, but they are all in the same guilt; but only Adam sinned by both action and guilt insofar as he committed the first sin." Lectures on Romans (LW, 25:304).

⁴Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:242: "Human nature is 'an evilly disposed nature,' . . . a 'corrupted nature,' . . . a flesh poisoned by sin, . . . in which evil lust reigns."

Baptism removes original sin though it does not remove its "wound," i.e., the "guilt" is removed, but the corrupting influence (the "old man") remains until death.¹ This post-baptism residual sin is "tinder," or "baptized concupiscence," which was not, in the final analysis, sin, but could be inflamed to sin.^{2,3}

Luther's conception of original sin was further concretized through the work of Philip Melancthon (1497-1560).⁴ Because of his mild manner,

¹Treatise on Good Works (SW, 1:196): "Nobody has ever been so holy that he never felt some evil inclination within himself, especially when occasion and temptation were present together. For original sin is born in us by nature: it may be checked, but it cannot be entirely uprooted except through death." Cf. Against Latomus (SW, 1:97-99). Luther wrote further, "After baptism original sin is like a wound which has begun to heal. It is really a wound, yet it is becoming better and is constantly in the process of healing, although it is still festering, is painful, etc. So original sin remains in the baptized until their death, although it is in the process of being rooted out. It is rendered harmless, and so it cannot accuse or damn us." Table Talk 138 (LW, 54:20).

²Defense of Articles 3 (WL, 3:36-37): "The sin remaining after baptism, of which we spoke in the preceding article, is called 'tinder' [*fomes peccati*] because, as every one observes in his own case, it is easily inflamed and moved to evil love, lust and works, as tinder easily takes fire."

³Luther's view of sin can be characterized as Augustinian but he was ever seeking to represent the radical view of Scripture as he understood it. He wrote in On the Councils and the Church 3 (SW, 4:275-276): "Scripture clearly teaches the meaning of these words, that we are 'conceived in sin,' Psalm 51 (:5), that we are 'by nature children of wrath,' Ephesians 2 (:3), and that we must all be accounted sinners 'because of the sin of one man,' Romans (5:12)." Again the influence of his own experience is detectable in his theology. His loyalty to Augustinian tradition was simply a task motivated by a desire to develop theology along Scriptural lines and he felt free to differ with the earlier theologian wherever he thought Scriptural faithfulness warranted such a departure.

⁴In contrast to his famous Wittenberg colleague's bombastic style, Melancthon was a soother and refiner of Reformation theology. Citing Luther's words, Gonzalez includes these lines which reveal the Reformer's recognition of Melancthon's unique gifts: "I am rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike. . . . I must remove stumps and stones, cut away thistles and thorns, and clear the wild forests, and Master Philippus comes along softly and gently, sowing and watering with joy, according to the gifts which God has abundantly bestowed upon him." Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:94. Despite Melancthon's later wandering from Lutheran ideas on free will and the Eucharist, he remained in essential

Melanchthon became Luther's penman, at the latter's request, in the composition of the clearest and most significant statement of the Reformer's faith, the Augsburg Confession (1530). This Confession, along with the Apology of the Confession (1531), prepared in answer to the Roman Catholic refutation of the Confession itself, included detailed explanations of both Reformers' views on original sin.¹

Melanchthon upheld original guilt,² emphasized that all men are corrupt "from their mothers' wombs and are unable by nature to have true fear of God or true faith in God,"³ reiterated that concupiscence is not only acts or fruits but "continual inclination of nature."⁴ He condemned those who deny that original sin is vice, corruption, or guilt, and those who say Adam's sin only brought death.⁵ Concupiscence is to be understood as

agreement on original sin and predestination although his subsequent synergism posed a threat to his earlier views on these subjects and tended to avoid discussion especially on the latter question. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:349.

¹Augsburg Confession 2.1-3 (BC, 29): "It is also taught among us that since the fall of Adam all who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. That is, all men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mothers' wombs and are unable by nature to have true fear of God and true faith in God. Moreover, this inborn sickness and hereditary sin [Erbsünde] is truly sin and condemns to the eternal wrath of God all those who are not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit. Rejected in this connection are the Pelagians and others who deny that original sin is sin, for they hold that natural man is made righteous by his own powers, thus disparaging the sufferings and merit of Christ."

²Apology of the Augsburg Confession 2.1 (BC, 100): "They [the Catholic theologians] say that being without the fear of God and faith is actual guilt, and therefore they deny that it is original guilt."

³Ibid., 2.2 (BC, 100). See Melanchthon, Loci Communes, "Sin" 3.

⁴Apology 2.3 (BC, 101). Cf. Loci Communes, "Sin" 1 (LCC, 19:30): "Original sin is a native propensity and an innate force and energy by which we are drawn to sinning."

⁵Apology 2.5. Though he used it, Melanchthon was not fond of the medieval distinction between original and actual sin because he considered it to be superfluous and extra-scriptural. "Scripture calls both

disease "since human nature is born full of corruption and faults."¹ He launched a long assault on the scholastics and their low view of man's undoneness² and insisted that original sin involves not only the negative loss of original righteousness but also positive faults such as "ignorance of God, contempt of God, lack of fear of God, and of trust in him, inability to love him."³ This meant that when man lost original righteousness, concupiscence followed and the latter is to be understood as "not merely a corruption of the physical constitution, but the evil inclination of man's higher capacities to carnal things."⁴ Original sin is therefore a kind of "depraved desire," an "innate force and energy."⁵

Original sin is to be understood as (1) lack of ability to trust, fear, and love God, and (2) concupiscence which pursues carnal ends contrary to the Word of God.⁶ Melancthon pitted the scholastics ("sophists") and

the actual and original defect (vitium) simply 'sin' (peccatum), although sometimes it calls these sins which we call 'actual,' the 'fruits of sin.' Paul commonly does this in Romans; and what we call 'original sin,' David sometimes calls 'transgression,' at other times 'iniquity.' There is no reason why we should dispute here about those stupid relations in sin, mentioned above. Sin is a depraved affection, a depraved activity of the heart against the law of God." Loci Communes, "Sin" 1 (LCC, 19:31).

¹Apology 2.5-6 (BC, 101). Like Luther, Melancthon held that the "flesh" referred to the whole of man. See Loci Communes, "Sin" 5.

²Apology 2.7ff.

³ibid. 2:14. "When the sophists say that original sin is the lack of original righteousness, as they express it, they are right. But why do they not add that where there is no original righteousness or the Spirit, there in reality is flesh, godlessness, a contempt for spiritual things? Therefore, the dominant affection of man's nature is love of self, by which he is swept along, so that he wishes and desires only those things which seem good, pleasant, sweet, and glorious to his nature; he hates and dreads those things which seem against his nature, and he resists the one who keeps him from what he desires or who orders him to pursue what is unpleasant to seek." Loci Communes, "Sin" 2 (LCC, 19:31-32).

⁴Apology 2.25 (BC, 103).

⁵Loci Communes, "Sin" 1 (LCC, 19:30-31).

⁶Apology 2.26.

their philosophy against Paul and the Scripture but then quoted scholastics Thomas, Bonaventure, and Hugo, in support of Luther's view:¹ Luther's position on baptism and original sin was defended by clearly repeating the German Reformer's intent: that guilt is removed by baptism though concupiscence remains.² Melancthon was careful to remind Charles V (the emperor to whom the Apology was addressed) that the Holy Spirit immediately begins his regenerative work to "mortify lust and to create new impulses in man."³ Depravity and concupiscence both are properly called sin and penalty but Christ was given to bear both sin and death, as well as to destroy the works of the devil.⁴ Melancthon concluded the Article by reaffirming that this teaching was supported both by Scripture and the tradition of the church fathers.⁵

Similar explanations and defenses for this Lutheran version of the Augustinian doctrine can be seen in the Smalcald Articles (1537) and the Formula of Concord (1577).⁶

¹Ibid., 2.27-31.

²Ibid., 2.35.

³Ibid., (BC, 105).

⁴Ibid., 2.46-50.

⁵For a precise 20-point summary see Loci Communes, "Sin" 5 (LCC, 19:47-49).

⁶Several years of theological debate among Lutheran thought leaders included controversies over antinomianism, Osianderian and Majoristic divergencies, the adiaphora, the eucharist, Christology, and predestination. See Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:100-119. All of these debates ended in the clear Lutheran pronouncements to be found in the Formula of Concord (1577), signed by 8,188 Lutheran theologians, ministers, and teachers. See Formula of Concord, Epitome 1, and Solid Declaration I. The Formula presented three affirmative theses and nine antitheses which essentially reaffirmed Luther's view but had the specific purpose of answering the view of Matthias Flacius (1520-1575), a Lutheran theologian who, in an effort to stave off the synergistic errors, had gone to the other extreme and declared that man's sinful nature was no longer to be seen as accidental

but rather as substantial. See Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:383-384; Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:457. In this view Flacius saw man as partaker in the image of the devil, as opposed to the original imago Dei, and every point of attachment to divine influence has been lost so that man's substantial form (forma substantialis) has been altered. Cf. John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, Protestant Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), p. 82: "He defined total depravity as the complete loss of everything which makes man a genuine person, including every capacity for good." Though Flacius is not named by the Formula, his position is labelled Manichaeic, and condemned. Epitome 1.13. Cf. ibid. 1, Antithesis 7 (BC ,468): "We also reject the Manichaeic error that original sin is an essential, self-existing something which Satan infused into and mingled with human nature, as when poison and wine are mixed." Along with this, Pelagian (ibid. 1.7ff.) and Anabaptist (ibid. 12) views are also rejected.

A major reaction to the Lutheran tradition on original sin merits brief mention here because of its influence on modern theology: the views of Faustus Sozzini [Socinus] (1539-1604). Brunner calls such a reaction "intelligible" after the inordinate emphasis of Luther and his defenders on total depravity (Creation and Redemption, p. 116). Inheriting anti-trinitarian views from his uncle Lelio Sozzini (1525-1562), the younger Socinus became an influential Polish theologian. Socinus' teachings were similar to the views of Michael Servetus (1511-1553) who was burned at the stake in Geneva (see Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:91, and Heick, History of Christian Thought, 2:137). His views were set down in an organized fashion in the Racovian Catechism in 1605, the year after his death. Socinianism was rooted in a rationalism that later was compatible with the Enlightenment thought, a factor which explains its move through Renaissance Europe and later to the Unitarian and deist movements in England and America (Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:92). Sozzini denied the trinity, the divinity of Christ and the Spirit, the substitutionary atonement, satisfaction as justice, infant baptism, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the immortality of the soul, and eternal punishment as punishing. The premise for denials was an alleged search for a rational religion that was "Scriptural." In practice, however, it was the reasonableness of truth that took priority. See Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v., "Socinianism," by Robert G. Clouse; Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:92, 241; Håggglund, History of Theology, pp. 322-324, 335; Heick, History of Christian Thought, 2:143.

Along with this reasonableness presupposition was a second one: the only acceptable truth was that which was morally utilitarian. Hence the Socinian anthropology can best be characterized as neo-Pelagian. While man was created "in God's image," theology is not to understand that in Protestant or Augustinian terms as either original righteousness or wisdom and knowledge. Death was in no way connected to Adam's sin since man was created mortal by nature, and would die regardless of his faithfulness to God. Man had no propensities to sin since nothing was lost in the Fall regarding his nature. Consequently, the traditional view of depravity is denied. Just as no man could die to satisfy justice for another man's shortcoming, so no man could sin for another, hence any doctrine of vicarious imputation must be rejected. Sozzini insisted on a Pelagian absolute freedom and preshadowed the Kantian concept that since one ought, one can. See

The Reformed Tradition

The first of the Reformed theologians was Ulrich (Huldrych) Zwingli (1484-1531)¹ and the best known spokesman was John Calvin (1509-1564). The differences between these two Reformers and Luther on original sin were relatively minor.² All three were fundamentally Augustinian, but each in his own way made what adjustments he felt necessary to bring that doctrine into more consistent expression with Scripture.

Zwingli understood sin to be motivated by a desire to be equal with God; hence the root of sin is to be found in egoism.³ The result of the first sin is a shattered (zerbrochen)⁴ nature which renders man totally helpless of being saved or obeying the law of God.⁵ Man has no way of

ibid., 2:140-141. By the mid-seventeenth century Socinianism was banned in Poland but by then the ground had been laid for the rationalistic theology of the Enlightenment. Cf. Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 322.

¹For help in understanding Zwingli and his thought see Samuel Macauley Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli (New York: G. T. Putnam's Sons, 1901); Gottfried W. Locher, Huldrych Zwingli in Neuer Sicht (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1969); and G. R. Potter, Zwingli (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

²The question of what man lost at the Fall has continued to be a central question for theology (as this study has shown). The medieval theologians saw Adam losing the donum superadditum. The Reformers understand this question more clearly in the context of the Biblical expression, "image of God" (imago Dei). Luther, in his view of sin as an orientation toward God, held that man has lost the imago Dei when he is out of relationship. Reformed theology held that imago Dei is not annihilated but horribly deformed. See Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Doctrine of Man," by William Hordern.

³Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:69-70. Cf. Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli, p. 377.

⁴Locher, Huldrych Zwingli, p. 240: "Seit Adam ist unsere Natur 'zerbrochen,' and zwar total. Alles in uns ist böse; auch unsere geistige Existenz ist 'Fleisch.' Dabei bleibt es, auch wenn in Zwinglis späteren Schriften die Seele (mens und anima), nicht etwa der Verstand (ratio oder intellectus), als der Teil des Menschen hervortritt, an den der Heilige Geist sich primär wendet."

⁵Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:309.

escape outside of God's salvific activity.¹ However, Zwingli was reticent to speak of man's inherited state in quite so extreme a fashion as Luther had, emphasizing man's present condition rather as a misfortune than a fault, a disease more than sin,² an infirmity and defect (Bresten und Mangel),³ a sickness (morbus)⁴ or inborn weakness, i.e., an inescapable proneness to sin.⁵ He could say that this condition is not improperly called sin² and yet it is not to be seen as worthy of damnation.⁷ In contrast to Luther and Calvin, he held back when it came to a radical statement of original sin as real sin inherent in human nature.⁸ Man is prone to sin and unable to escape, but corruption is not properly called sin.⁹

The mitigating element that restrained Zwingli in this presentation of radical sin can be found in his humanistic background. While maintaining a high definition of sin, the Swiss Reformer also allowed for the reasonableness of humanism to temper his statements. Thus one sees a tension carefully maintained on this point of his theology, and the result was a doctrine that proved to be more acceptable to the modern mind than that of either of his colleagues.¹⁰ True, Adam incurred guilt (and his posterity

¹Ibid.

²B. B. Warfield, Biblical and Theological Studies, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co, 1968), p. 165.

³Seeberg, History of Doctrines, 2:309.

⁴Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:359.

⁵Potter, Zwingli, p. 336.

⁶Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli, p. 377.

⁷Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:359.

⁸Potter, Zwingli, p. 320.

⁹Ibid., p. 336.

¹⁰Unlike Arminius who also tried to deal with the question of individual responsibility, Zwingli has been defended by historians of Christian

participates in that guilt, or else death could theoretically be avoided), but man's participation in Adam's sin is more like a slave whose son inherits the position of slavery than like a person who is unreasonably held accountable for another person's mistake.¹ Thus Zwingli rejected inherited guilt.² Essentially what is inherited is the result of sin, i.e., death of the soul,³ rather than the sin itself.⁴ But this is more a logical correction of Augustine than an actual one. Man still suffers the full impact of sin both original and actual. He dies because he is inseparably connected with that original sin of Adam. Adam could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not himself have, i.e., freedom from death.⁵ And that death includes not just some kind of mortality but sin itself—self-love. "Therefore his mind (mens) is bad, and his disposition (animus) is bad from the beginning of his life."⁵

Infant baptism was not repudiated by Zwingli but it was not considered necessary, of itself, for a child's salvation;⁶ rather it was a dedication on the part of the parents and the church to recognize this child

thought, against any charges of Pelagian tendencies. See, for example, Warfield, Biblical and Theological Studies, p. 265.

¹Ibid.

²Cf. Hägglund, History of Theology, p. 256.

³Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli, pp. 376-377.

⁴Gonzalez, History of Christian Thought, 3:70.

⁵Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli, p. 377.

⁶Quoted in Ibid.

⁷Potter, Zwingli, p. 189.

as a possibly elected saint.¹ Election, not cleansing from sin, was the basis for infant baptism.²

In comparison to Luther and Calvin, Zwingli's view was a mitigated one, and Jackson has aptly identified its distinctiveness:

Zwingli is unique among the three great Reformers for the clearness with which he makes the fundamental distinction between the corruption of our nature and what is properly sin, for he says there are two kinds of sin received in evangelical doctrine: first the disease (morbus) which we contracted from the author of the race by which we are addicted to self-love, and the second that which is done contrary to the law.³

John Calvin⁴ was more extreme than Zwingli though possibly more optimistic than Luther.⁵ Man is in a miserable condition thanks to Adam's involving the whole human race in sin through his Fall. Sin is not sensual

¹Heick, History of Christian Thought, 1:355: "Luther would not part with infant baptism because baptism was the only means of bringing children to their Lord and Saviour; Zwingli stressed that baptism was a means of supplying members for his folk church." Cf. Potter, Zwingli, p. 336.

²Potter, Zwingli, p. 189. "Some [children] were predestined to salvation. Among infants no human being could possibly know those whom God had chosen, and so to deny baptism to anyone of these would be to assume knowledge which did not, and could not exist. Therefore all children of Christian parents could and should be baptized."

³Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli, p. 377.

⁴For study of John Calvin's theology see Wilhelm Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, trans. Harold Knight (London: Letterworth Press, 1956; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980); William Park Armstrong, ed. Calvin and the Reformation (Princeton: Princeton Theological Review Assn., 1909; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980); and Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield, Calvin and Augustine, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1956).

⁵Calvin's views are set forth in his Institutes of the Christian Religion (2.1). Cf. The Genevan Confession 4-8. Williams suggests that Calvin is less pessimistic than Luther (Ideas of the Fall, p. 428). In his Institutes Calvin maintained that the doctrine of original sin was crucial to knowing one's self in true humility, the result of which would be a willingness to accept the state we are in, before God, and therefore to embrace Christ's mercy (Institutes 2.1.1-4). "When viewing our miserable condition since Adam's fall, all confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and feel truly humble." Ibid. 2.1.1 (Beveridge, 1:210).

intemperance (a view Calvin calls "childish")¹ but is rooted in pride and constitutes infidelity.² The act provoked God to inflict fearful vengeance on the whole human race, and its effect extended both to nature in general and mankind in particular. In the latter it took on the character of hereditary corruption or depravation of a nature that was previously pure and good.³

Dismissing the arguments of Pelagianism (or any theory of imitation),⁴ and Manichaeism,⁵ Calvin (like Luther) stresses original sin as "ruin," "depravity," "corruption," "vitiating," and "loss."⁶ Calvin sees culpability in depravity: "We suffer his [Adam's] punishment because we too are guilty, since God holds our nature, which has been corrupted in Adam, guilty of iniquity."⁷ To sin, then, does not only mean to commit an actual sin consciously or deliberately but has the additional dimension: "to be corrupt and vitiated."⁸

¹Institutes 2.1.4 (Beveridge, 1:212).

²Ibid.: "The prohibition to touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a trial of obedience, that Adam, by observing it, might prove his willing submission to the command of God. For the very term shows the end of the precept to have been to keep him contented with his lot, and not allow him arrogantly to aspire beyond it. . . . Augustine, indeed, is not far from the mark, when he says (in Psal. xix), that pride was the beginning of all evil, because, had not man's ambition carried him higher than he was permitted, he might have continued in his first estate. . . . In fine, infidelity opened the door to ambition, and ambition was the parent of rebellion, man casting off the fear of God, and giving free vent to his lust."

³Ibid., 2.1.4; 2.1.5.

⁴Ibid., 2.1.6.

⁵Ibid., 2.1.11.

⁶Commentary on Romans 5.12-14 (M, 111-112).

⁷Ibid., 5.17 (M, 117).

⁸Ibid., (M, 111-112). "The natural depravity which we bring from our mother's womb, although it does not produce its fruits immediately, is

Because of original sin the will is "miserably enslaved" (Calvin's equivalent to the Lutheran notion, "bondage of the will"). Calvin's understanding of God's answer to this enslavement is to be found in the Augustinian notion of God's sovereign and gracious election (just as it was for Luther and Zwingli), for everything that proceeds from the corrupt human nature is damnable (a departure from Zwingli).¹ Man is corrupt in his intellect, his heart, and his will.² Reason has not been wholly destroyed in fallen man and will is not entirely eradicated, thus "simply to will is the part of man, to will ill the part of corrupt nature, to will well the part of

still sin before God, and deserves His punishment. This is what is called original sin. As Adam at his first creation had received for his posterity as well as for himself the gifts of divine grace (divinae gratiae dotes), so by falling from the Lord, in himself he corrupted, vitiated, depraved, and ruined our nature—having lost the image of God (abdicatus a Dei similitudine), the only seed which he could have produced was that which bore resemblance to himself (sui simile). We have, therefore, all sinned, because we are all imbued with natural corruption, and for this reason are wicked and perverse." In the Institutes 2.1.8, (Beveridge 1:217), Calvin wrote, "Original sin, then, may be defined as a hereditary corruption and depravity of our nature, extending to all the parts of the soul, which first makes us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and then produces in us works which in Scripture are termed works of the flesh. This corruption is repeatedly designated by Paul by the term sin (Ga. v. 19); while the works which proceed from revelings, he terms, in the same way, the fruits of sin though in various passages of Scripture, and even by Paul himself, they are also termed sins." Trent spoke directly to this Protestant idea when it decreed: "This concupiscence, which at times the apostle calls sin [Rom. 6:12ff.] the holy Synod declares that the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin, as truly and properly sin in those born again, but because it is from sin and inclines to sin." Session 5, Canon 5 (D, 792). Here is a clear disagreement between Trent and the Reformers.

Both Luther and Calvin sought to present sin as a malady and both set forth the idea of the will's bondage or enslavement. Consequently, both accepted the Augustinian solution for original sin, namely, a metaphysical determinism which was set forth as a Pauline teaching. However, neither really solved the problem of God's responsibility in this immediacy with sin.

¹Institutes 2.3.

²Ibid., 2.3.5 (Beveridge, 253): "There remains a will which both inclines and hastens on with the strongest affection toward sin; man when placed under this bondage, being deprived not of will, but of soundness of will." Though enslaved, man's will still exists. Ibid., 2.3.1, 2.

grace."¹ The "flesh" refers to the whole man and is Scripture's way of expressing the totality of sin's effect.² This loss of the will's capacity to will preserves Christ as the only hope for lost man by irresistible grace.³

The Reformed confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reflect the major elements of Calvin's notion of original sin and abound with terms like: *enfeebled nature, inclination to sin, inherited sin, children of wrath, ruined and poisoned race, blind nature, corrupt and perverse heart, deprivation, destitution, alienation from God, total corruption, depraved in heart, captive in will, hereditary evil, utter defacements, separation from God, hereditary disease, infection, innate corruption, contempt for God, and wickedness.* In all cases original sin is truly sin and produces fruits of malice, rebellion, and hostility to God. The will is captive to sin and man is liable to corporeal and spiritual death, as well as "just judgment." Baptism is enrollment or adoption into the covenant relationship, and though children need not be baptized from the viewpoint of medieval, sacramental purposes, infant baptism is significant as a sign of consecration. While baptism is effective in cancelling the condemnation of original sin, the "disease" of original sin is never fully removed in this life.⁴

The most significant Reformed creed for the English-speaking world was the Westminster Confession (1646) in that it formed the base for the

¹Ibid. 2.3.5.

²Ibid. 2.3.1.

³For a comprehensive summary of Calvin's views on sin see Niesel, Theology of Calvin, pp. 80-91.

⁴First Confession of Basel 2, 12; First Helvetic Confession (1536) 7-11, 21; Geneva Confession (1536) 4-9, 15; French Confession of Faith (1559) 9-14, 35; Scottish Confession of Faith (1560) 3.8.23; Belgic Confession of Faith (1561, revised 1619) 12-16, 34; Second Helvetic Confession (1566) 8-10, 20; Heidelberg Catechism (1563) 1.2.3-11.

Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist creeds in colonial America.¹ This confession uses the terminology of covenant theology which would form an integral part of American Puritan thought as well as classical Calvinism.²

The Westminster Confession took the position that by their sin the first parents "fell from their original righteousness and communion with God."³ The effect of this Fall was death and defilement of "all the faculties and parts of soul and body."⁴ The "guilt of this sin was imputed" to all mankind and the death and defilement were "conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation."⁵ Depravity is the corrupt

¹John H. Leith, ed., Creeds of the Churches, rev. ed. (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973), pp. 192-193.

²Covenant theology was a view of man's election, largely the work of Johannes Cocceius [Koch] (1603-1699), a Dutch Calvinist who had been influenced by the later writings of Melancthon and consequently sought to find a softer alternative to the neo-Augustinian determinism of the Reformers. See Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Johannes Cocceius." Cf. Westminster Catechism 12, 20, for an explicit statement of covenant theology. See also Charles Caldwell Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), pp. 177-193, for a critical but sympathetic history of covenant theology. The fact that Cocceius' work on this theological perspective, Summa doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei, appeared two years after the Westminster Confession is evidence that this notion was not entirely new with him. It was in development before either of these works systematized it. The Second Helvetic confession was the work of Johann Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575). Federal theology was a post-Reformation development especially discernible in the thought of Bullinger, Polanus, Gomarus, Cloppenburg, and Cocceius, and Ryrie traces shreds of this thought even farther back to Hyperius, Olevianus, Eglinus, and William Ames (1576-1633), a time frame spanning from 1511-1633. See Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today, p. 108, and New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Johann Heinrich Bullinger," by Robert C. Walton. All of these theologians were minor or secondary Reformers, but through studying with Ames, Cocceius found what he considered to be a helpful vehicle (in covenant theology) for fighting predestination. For this study it suffices simply to note that Federal Theology, via the Westminster Confession, came to America with the Puritans.

³Westminster Confession 6.1-2 (Leith, 201).

⁴*Ibid.*, 6.2 (Leith, 201).

⁵*Ibid.*, 6.3 (Leith, 201). See further Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:47ff., for a discussion of the Westminster emphasis on seminal identity.

nature at the root of utter indisposition, disability, opposition to all good, and whole inclination to all evil.¹ Out of such "original corruption" proceeds all actual sinning.² Adam's sin was a sin of nature, a "corruption of his whole nature," in that in Adam "mankind," i.e., unindividualized human nature, sinned.³ Consequently, this natural corruption continues to reside in man even after regeneration and is properly referred to as sin even though at the same time regenerated man is pardoned and his original sin is mortified through Christ.⁴ Both original and actual sin are designated "transgression of the righteous law of God," and both bring "guilt upon the sinner."⁴ As an original and actual sinner man is under the wrath of God and "the curse of the law" and therefore subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal."⁶

Next comes the clear statement of immediate imputation of Adam's sin (guilt) to his posterity, but through the vehicle of Covenant Theology. God has made a covenant. First, he made a covenant with Adam, the federal head of the race. It was a covenant of "works" that promised life in return for perfect obedience and faithfulness to God and was made not only with Adam but "in him to his posterity" as well.⁷ Upon Adam's failure to meet these conditions, mankind was rendered incapable of life by that

¹Westminster Confession, 6.3.

²Ibid., 6.4 (Leith, 201).

³Cf. Westminster Shorter Catechism, Questions 17-19 (Schaff, 3:679).

⁴Westminster Confession 6.5.

⁵Ibid., 6.6 (Leith, 202).

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 7.2 (Leith, 202).

covenant,¹ and God accordingly provided a covenant of "grace" which granted the same end through Christ.² This covenant is typified in several ways throughout the Old Testament but is finally fulfilled and actually exhibited in Christ, or in the Gospel. Salvation becomes an event that is outside the realm of man's capability, though he may accept it.³ Yet Adam's sin has had a definite ill-effect on his will. While he originally had the capacity of "natural liberty" to please God, man, by his Fall "into a state of sin," lost that ability "wholly" to do "any spiritual good accompanying salvation" so that his natural bent is away from good, described as "dead in sin."⁴ This necessitates the action of God to arouse any kind of spiritual will at all, to convert man, and to "translate" him into a "state of grace" which frees him from this natural "bondage under sin."⁵ So far as total reinstatement of man's good will, this is reserved for glorification.⁶

The Westminster Confession reaffirmed the doctrine of predestination as indissolubly connected with that of "effectual calling."⁷ Once it was clear that man's will was dead, it remained to be seen that God would elect those in whom such a dead will was to be resurrected. Atonement became particular (and the plan of salvation was restricted) to "the elect" of God.⁸ Children (infants) of one or both believing parents

¹Ibid., 7.3.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 7:4-6.

⁴Ibid., 9.1-3 (Leith, 205).

⁵Ibid., 9.4 (Leith, 205-206).

⁶Ibid., 9.5.

⁷Ibid., 10 (Leith, 206).

⁸Cf. Ibid., 10-18.

should be baptized,¹ although the "efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered."²

In short, overwhelming emphasis was put on man's depraved condition due to Adam's sin. The old Augustinian preoccupation with genetics was practically non-existent even though there was occasional mention of propagation and clearly a racial connection with Adam. Guilt was present but not treated in the traditional Augustinian way. Man was lost because he was disconnected from God. Original sin was dealt with from the pride motif rather than concupiscence-as-sexual-lust motif.³

The Radical Tradition

The Anabaptist movement was a phenomenon contemporary with the Lutheran and Reformed traditions. From the synthesis of the Greek terms *ἀνα* and *βαπτίζω*, the original nickname "re-baptizers" became the designation for their movement.⁴ The leaders of the movement included a

¹Ibid., 28.

²Ibid., 28.6. By the time the Reformed tradition had reached America it was essentially devoid of the Cyprianic notion that insisted on baptism to wash away original sin. The Lutheran doctrine of simul justus et peccator seemed to have erased that connection, for in Luther's paradox of salvation the form of infant baptism could be kept without requiring the strict sacramentalism traditionally attached to it from Cyprian on. Dedication or consecration was the meaning stressed in infant baptism by this time.

³In this sense the Reformed doctrine was clearly of the tradition of the Bishop of Hippo but with a shift of emphasis away from some greater problems. It is clear that the Reformed doctrine tried to deal with Augustinian problems, albeit in a decisively different way than medieval theology had done. Baptism carried practically none of the old Cyprianic ontology but was rather seen as a rite to initiate a divine claim on the child in the covenant of grace. While original sin was loosely connected, in that here condemnation was imposed, the struggle with depravity after baptism was an ever-present reality in the Christian's development.

⁴Roland H. Bainton, The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), p. 99. Cf. Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Anabaptists."

conglomeration of dissenters who agreed unanimously on little more than the one major issue—that baptism was intended for believers and infant baptism was not true baptism.¹ At least six major factions of Anabaptists have been identified,² but they are significant for this study in their several similarities to the later American movements and especially the Adventist movement, in terms of their spirit, their philosophical outlook, and their beliefs,³ e.g., soul-sleep, chiliasm, prophetic gift (Zwickau prophets), believer-baptism, anti-church and state union, pacifism, anti-trinitarianism, emphasis on strong discipline, denial of such things as total depravity, election, and eternal damnation (although it is not meant here to leave the impression that any one group agreed on all these peculiarities at one time or that all groups held these in common).⁴

Factional leaders in Anabaptism included Thomas M nzer (c.1490-1525), Balthasar Hubmaier (c.1485-1528), Jacob Hutter (d.1536), Melchior Hoffman (1498-1543), Jan Mattys (d.1534), and Menno Simons (1469-1561).⁵ The movement they piloted was quite separate from Lutheran and Reformed

¹Roland H. Bainton, The Age of the Reformation (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1956), pp. 122-131.

²Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v. "Anabaptists."

³Roland H. Bainton, Studies on the Reformation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), pp. 119-129.

⁴Baker's Dictionary of Theology, s.v. "Anabaptists," by Gregg Singer. See also Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Anabaptists," by J. T. McNeill.

⁵Bainton characterizes the entire movement as such: (1) It was critical of the morality of the Reformation theology, suggesting that the emphasis on justification had actually done damage to the views of holiness (sanctification) in the church with behavioral consequences; (2) It was critical of the sophistication of the Reformation, opting rather for primitiveness, seen in its literal and mystical interpretations of Scripture; (3) It was eschatologically tuned or oriented; (4) It had a strong anti-intellectual bias—anti-theological in the sense of stressing the unnecessary of dogma, e.g., anti-trinitarianism in some quarters; (5) It stressed and insisted on the

traditions and in the case of some beliefs apparently unrelated developmentally.¹

Robert Friedmann suggests that the early Anabaptists were probably unfamiliar with Augustinian tradition except as they ran into it in the society of the Reformers.² Hübmaier, one of the earlier of the Anabaptist theological leaders, started his anthropology from a tripartite understanding of man: man as spirit, soul, and body.³ The body was clay, "dust, ashes, dirt," the spirit was happy and willing to do good, and the soul was that part of man that held the other two parts together and originally all three parts of man were "good," "in the image of God."⁴ Each part had a corresponding will—spirit-will, soul-will, and body-will—and had the capability of "carrying to completion a free choice of good or evil."⁵ But

separation of church and state. Bainton, Studies on the Reformation, pp. 119ff. Bainton then makes a vital connection between Anabaptism and the American spirit which must be remembered in this study: "In Germany in the sixteenth century Anabaptism and related movements were thoroughly suppressed and never again raised their heads, whereas in England in the seventeenth century the spiritual descendants of the left wing gained a permanent foothold and did even more than the established church to fashion the temper of England and America." *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹J. T. McNeill attributes this to the "mystical" and sharp literalistic Biblical hermeneutic they used to determine their truth. Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Anabaptists." See Hübmaier, On Free Will 2.2 (LCC, 25:110-122), where Hübmaier makes Eve a symbol of fleshly temptation and builds his doctrine on this allegorical interpretation. Cf. George H. Williams, The Radical Reformation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 220.

²Robert Friedman, The Theology of Anabaptism (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1973), p. 61. Cf. Williams, Radical Reformation, pp. 799-800. The Anabaptists apparently drew their doctrine of sinfulness from the following Scriptural data: Gen 3, Eze 18:20, 4 Esdras 3, 7, and 1 Cor 15.

³On Free Will 1.

⁴*Ibid.*, (LCC, 25:118). Cf. Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, p. 59.

⁵On Free Will (LCC, 25:117). Cf. Williams, Radical Reformation, p. 219.

at the Fall Adam lost this freedom for himself and all of his descendants."¹ When the flesh acquiesced to temptation it became "utterly nought and helpless, even unto death," "worthless."² Describing the present condition of the flesh Hübmaier wrote:

It can do nothing except sin, strive against God, and hate his commands. From this comes the grievous complaint and accursed flesh. That is why it must return, according to the curse of God to each, whence it came, or it cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. So also it is with the blood, for the two are of one will . . . as Paul writes (1 Cor. 15:50): Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.³

Thus the soul is now caught in a struggle between the good spirit and the bad flesh, but the soul is "remediable through the Word of God."⁴ In obeying the flesh, the soul becomes flesh, whereas by obeying "the Word" it becomes spirit (John 3:16).⁵ Just as man with a bad part cannot be said to be all good, neither can man with spirit-will said to be "totally" depraved, and thus Hübmaier chose to emphasize a positive side of man rather than a more fatalistic one. This emphasis came to characterize Anabaptist anthropology.⁶ True, sin is a powerful force that is seated in the spirit-will.⁷ Why should man be seen strictly as a sinner? Why should Rom 5-7 get

¹On Free Will 2.2 (LCC, 25:119).

²Ibid., (LCC, 25:123).

³Ibid., (LCC, 25:121).

⁴Ibid. Cf. Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, p. 60.

⁵On Free Will 1 (LCC, 25:118), 2.2. Note *ibid.*, 2.3 (LCC, 25:125): "Now the soul is free and can follow either the spirit or the flesh. If it follows Eve, that is, the flesh, it becomes an Eve and carnal. But if it is obedient to the Spirit, it becomes a spirit;" and *ibid.*, (LCC, 25:126): "So now, the soul, after restoration, is whole, through the sent Word, and is truly made free."

⁶See Williams, Radical Reformation, p. 799. Cf. Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, p. 60.

⁷On Free Will 3 (LCC, 25:128).

more sermonic attention in the Christian pulpit than 1 Cor 13 or Rom 12?¹
The regenerated man has positive impulses through the inner light of the Word.²

For Hübmaier the enlightened or restored man is today more than just lover—he is now free to be obedient and can choose the good.³ The temptation of the flesh is over-powered as the enlightened soul unites with the spirit.⁴ Furthermore, this is a capacity that Adam did not originally have, i.e., that through Christ a person holds a greater position than Adam with respect to power over sin.⁵

While Friedmann denies that Anabaptism was teaching Pelagianism in this theology there are components in the theologians he cites (Hübmaier, Felbinger, Stadler, and the Hutterite Handbuchlein wider den Prozess)⁶ that have clear parallel notions. For instance, total depravity is impossible because the spirit that exists in man is pursuant of the good. Inborn sinfulness is not an unconquerable barrier in the struggle of Christian living.⁷ Love is the "countervailing force of sin." Children are born pure and innocent, original sin is not condemnatory, foreign sin does not condemn, and

¹Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, p. 61.

²On Free Will 2.3.

³Ibid., (LCC, 25:124): "It has recovered its lost freedom. It can now freely and willingly be obedient to the spirit and can will and choose the good, just as well as though it were in paradise. And it can reject and flee from evil."

⁴Williams, Radical Reformation, p. 220.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, pp. 58-64.

⁷Ibid., p. 60: "If man commands His way, man must be able to obey such commandments after experiencing rebirth and the restoration of man's freedom in God's image."

participation in Adam's sin is strictly by imitation. In the words of Sebastian Franck (c.1499–c.1542), a critic of Anabaptism, writing in 1531:

Concerning original sin nearly all Anabaptists teach as follows: Just as the righteousness of Christ is no avail to anyone unless he makes it part of his own being through faith, so also Adam's sin does not impair anybody except the one who makes it a part of his own being and brings forth fruits of this sin. For as foreign righteousness does not save anybody, so will foreign sin not condemn anybody either. On the other hand, if Adam's sin condemns all men at once by its inherent nature, it necessarily follows that Christ's righteousness would save all men at once. But if Christ's righteousness saves only those believers who by faith have become transformed into Christ, that is, who no longer live in themselves but Christ lives in them, then it follows clearly that Adam's sin likewise condemns only non-believers who became Adam not by the mere fact of having been born but by their particular faith, or rather unfaith, and by the fact that they bring forth fruits of this kind of faith. In other words, that they are rooted and planted in him and he in them. That is how they speak of that matter.¹

As a consequence of Adam's sin man does die temporally, but only through actual sin will man suffer eternal death. But one need not surrender to the inclination to sin [Neiglichkeit], in which case no actual sin will occur.² There is no power inherent in man that can overcome him if he is in Christ.³ Even Hutter's anklebende Sünde (sin which adheres to our nature) cannot be viewed as original sin in any traditional sense.⁴ It is possible that it be thoroughly defeated and eliminated.

In short, Anabaptism took a very hopeful view of man and had no doctrine of original sin as traditionally understood. Friedmann summarizes the concept as such:

Our inborn sinfulness is no unconquerable barrier to this task [of childlike obedience to God]; for sin—that is, original sin—must

¹Chronica, Zeytbuch und Gescheychtsbibel, quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

²Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, p. 64.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

never be understood as a kind of fate. Something in man has remained unspoiled and good, and "the fall of the soul is remediable through the Word of God [Psalm 19:7]."¹

Later Developments in Reformation Thought

At the risk of oversimplification the following generalizations should be considered.² In the post-Reformation period the Lutheran tradition stressed Erbsünde (inherited sin) and the guilt aspect of that sin.³ The Reformed tradition, on the other hand, stressed the "misery of sin," and a more open discussion was entertained on a number of considerations that Anabaptism would have viewed as crucial in regard to Christian anthropology. These concerns became important in later English and American theology. It is therefore relevant to trace briefly the movements in the Reformed tradition as they moved away from Calvin himself and into a more analytical approach to original sin. This necessitates a viewing of four influential positions on original sin: (1) the Arminian view;⁴ (2) the Federal view;⁵

¹Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism, p. 60.

²From Calvin and the confessions of the Reformed tradition emerged a century of theological debate and development that attempted to accomplish basically what the medieval theologians had been unable to do (at least in the eyes of the Reformers)—to work through and solve those abrasions and excesses of Augustinianism while adhering to sound hermeneutics and recognizing experiential realities. While a complete history of this development would be far too complicated for this study and would not serve the purpose here, it is helpful and necessary to summarize some major views that proposed to try once more to accomplish this.

³Bainton, Studies on the Reformation, p. 129.

⁴For a helpful survey of Arminianism's growth and development both in Holland and England, see Heick, History of Christian Thought, 2:64-92.

⁵For an extensive survey of Reformed scholastic development on Federal Theology, see Heinrich Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, rev. and ed. Ernst Bizer, trans. G. T. Thomson (reprint ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), pp. 320-370, and George B. Hutchinson, The Problem of Original Sin in American Presbyterian Theology (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1972). Cf. Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 449-465.

(3) the mediate imputation view;¹ and (4) the Realistic view.²

The Arminian View

Jacob Arminius (1560-1609) was a Dutch Reformed theologian at the University of Leyden who took exception to the accepted view of double predestination in Calvinism.³ His views (the Remonstrance) were condemned by the Synod of Dort (1618-1619),⁴ where the debate centered largely around the extent of the Atonement and the nature of grace and its relation to human will.⁵ His views were considered semi-Pelagian⁶ and have ever been strenuously opposed by Calvinism as such, yet they lived on to become a powerful force in the thinking on the subject, especially through the efforts of Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) and John Wesley (1703-1791) and his subsequent Methodist movement.⁷

¹See Sydney E. Ahlstrom, ed., Theology in America (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1967), pp. 211-249.

²See Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 436-448.

³J. I. Packer suggests that Arminianism stemmed from two philosophical principles: (1) that divine sovereignty and human freedom (and responsibility) are incompatible; and (2) that ability limits obligation. Packer's judgment is that "Arminianism made man's salvation depend ultimately on himself, saving faith being viewed throughout as man's own work and, because his own, not God's in him." Quoted in David N. Steele and Curtis C. Thomas, The Five Points of Calvinism (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1976), p. 14. The Reformed bias of this criticism must be recognized but Packer's evaluation shows his cognizance of Arminian tendencies toward anthropocentricity wherein lies its central philosophical and methodological difference from Calvinistic theology.

⁴Steele and Thomas, Five Points, pp. 14-15. Cf. Hägglund, History of Theology, pp. 268-269.

⁵Ibid., pp. 16-20.

⁶See Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, p. 187, and Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:52, 184.

⁷For Whitby, man was injured at the Fall and hence prone to actual sin, however, he was not connected to Adam by federal union or imputation of

The fundamental covenant idea was the starting point for Arminius' view. God entered into agreement with man requiring obedience and promising reward.¹ Such an agreement could see fulfillment because in man's original state he was fully capable of "voluntary and free obedience."²

Arminius held that, as a result of Adam's sin, man is sick—that is, he is destitute [privatio] of original righteousness, and that, left to himself,

guilt. It was through physical law that man is born ruined. The Wesleyan strain, on the other hand, was more radical in its view of the imputation of guilt while asserting the Arminian notion that this original guilt was cancelled by Christ's justification of all. As was true in other aspects of his soteriology, Wesley was to a great degree a synthesizer (or eclectic) so far as Calvin and Arminius were concerned. See Wesley's Doctrine of Original Sin in The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, 1st American ed. (New York: J. and J. Harper, 1827), 9:168ff.

¹Private Disputations 30.1-3.

²Ibid. 30.4 (NB, 2:74-75). God was in no way the cause of sin for he is "the chief good" and can do nothing but good (ibid.). Cf. Certain Articles 10.1 (NB, 2:490). That God could be neither the efficient cause nor the deficient cause of sin was the principle that guided Arminius through his entire discussion of theology. This caused him to reject the determinism of Calvinistic theology and to develop his view of original sin in such a way that God was not the essential author of human depravity. This is not to suggest that Luther and Calvin (or even Augustine for that matter) had not attempted to do the same. But their retreat into the "mysterious will of God" with regard to the ultimate rationale behind predestination proved to be unacceptable to Arminius. It was simply too convenient a defense on such a vital issue as the eternal integrity of God. For Arminius the cause of human sin was to be found simply in man's wrong use of his free will "allowed by God, and himself persuaded by the devil." See Private Disputations, 30.4 (NB, 2:74, 75), and Certain Articles 11.1-3 (NB, 2:491). Man must bear the responsibility for human sin. The devil had set out to separate man from God but man had exercised his will to accomplish the fulfillment of the scheme. Here, then, was the enormity of the sin of Adam which was offensive to God and brought guilt to mankind. Private Disputations 31.1. "(1) Because it was a transgression of such law as had been imposed to try whether man was willing to be (sublex) subject to the law of God, and it carried with it numbers of other grievous sins. (2) Because, after God had loaded man with such signal gifts, he (ausus) had the audacity to perpetrate this sin. (3) Because, when there was such great facility to abstain from sin, he suffered himself to be so easily induced, and did not satisfy his (affectus) inclination in such a copious abundance of things. (4) Because he committed that sin in a sanctified place which was a type of the heavenly Paradise, almost under the eyes of God himself, who conversed with him in a familiar manner." Ibid. 30.10 (NB, 2:76-77).

he cannot attain to righteousness,¹ for he has incurred the "Divine displeasure."² "Free will is unable to begin or to perfect any true and spiritual good without grace," and by "grace" Arminius insisted that he did not mean a Pelagian use of the term.³

Yet how could God be just and at the same time damn to eternal punishment mankind who could not possibly be held responsible for a sin (the actual sin of Adam) in which he had no existential or active part?⁴ Even in the church's tradition Arminius found the desire on the part of the fathers to soften and mitigate such a harsh notion.⁵ The key was to be found

¹Public Disputations 6.15-16. Cf. Declaration of Sentiments, On Predestination 3.

²Ibid., 6.15 (NB, 1:485).

³A Letter to Hippolytus 4 (NB, 2:472): "Free will is unable to begin or to perfect any true and spiritual good, without grace. That I may not be said, like Pelagius, to practice delusion with regard to the word 'grace,' I mean by it that which is the grace of Christ and which belongs to regeneration." In his Declaration of Sentiments, Arminius wrote in his On Predestination 3 (NB 1:252-253): "In his lapsed and sinful state, man is not capable, of and by himself, either to think, to will, or to do that which is really good; but it is necessary for him to be regenerated and renewed in his intellect, affections or will, and in all his powers, by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, that he may be qualified rightly to understand, esteem, consider, will, and perform whatever is truly good. When he is made a partaker of this regeneration or renovation, I consider that, since he is delivered from sin, he is capable of thinking, willing and doing that which is good, but yet not without the continued aids of Divine Grace." See ibid., 7 (NB, 1:256-257) for views on sinless perfection. In the Five Articles of the Remonstrants 3 (DCC, 268), the following declaration is made concerning the effect of original sin on man's will, and the nature of grace: "That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the working of his own free-will, inasmuch as in his state of apostasy and sin he can for himself and by himself think nothing that is good—nothing, that is, truly good, such as saving faith is, above all else. But that it is necessary that by God, in Christ and through his Holy Spirit to be born again and renewed in understanding, affections and will and in all his faculties, that he may be able to understand, think, will and perform what is truly good, according to the Word of God." (Ibid.).

⁴Certain Articles 12.1.

⁵Apology or Defence 13, 14.1,2.

in the work of Christ.¹ Though man is born depraved and with evil propensities (that can be properly called sin),² the Holy Spirit, for Jesus' sake, is authorized to exert an influence strong enough, i.e., "sufficient grace," to counteract the work of the inherited nature. Man is thereby empowered to cooperate with God. God, in his justice, inflicts the propensities of the sinful nature only to the person who consciously utilizes them, thus the responsibility both for sin and eternal damnation lies squarely on the resisting human will. Consequently, original sin is not condemnatory,³ and it would be Biblically unsound to insist that some sort of original guilt resting on the alien sin of Adam is immediately imputed to his posterity. Such an action would not be worthy of a just God. Guilt is only imputed as the person himself sins by allowing his inborn sinfulness to rule him. Nevertheless, it is surely true that mankind suffers the consequences of sin.⁴

¹Ibid., 12.

²Ibid., 31 (NB, 1:375): "I quoted the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the Apostle treats on the sin; and says that 'it produces in the unregenerate all manner of concupiscence,' thus intimating that we must distinguish between actual sin, and that which was the cause of other sins, and which, on this very account might be denominated 'sin.'"

³Ibid., 13, 14.

⁴Public Disputations 7.15 (NB, 1:483, 486): "The withdrawing of that primitive righteousness and holiness, which, because they are the effects of the Holy Spirit dwelling in man, ought not to have remained in him after he had fallen from the favor of God, and had incurred the Divine displeasure. . . . The whole of this sin, however, is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to the entire race and to all their posterity, who, at the time when this sin was committed, were in their loins, and who have since descended from them by the natural mode of propagation, according to the primitive benediction. . . . Wherefore, whatever punishment was brought down upon our first parents, has likewise pervaded and yet pursues all their posterity. So that all men 'are by nature the children of wrath,' (Eph. ii,3,) obnoxious to condemnation, and to temporal as well as to eternal death; they are also devoid of that original righteousness and holiness. (Rom. v, 12, 18, 19.) With these evils they would remain oppressed forever, unless they were liberated by Christ Jesus; to whom be glory forever."

Arminius held that infants are innocent, thanks to the atoning work of Christ, and that if they die in infancy, their salvation is secure. One must remember that not only are believers in covenant relationship with God; the whole race is such, through Christ. Furthermore, all children necessarily carry the same status in Christ before God regardless of their origin, i.e., pagan or Christian.¹

To reject an infant would be God's way of saying that Christ's covenant had to do with all members of the human race (in Adam) except those under the age of accountability.² To forgive Adam for his first sin and then impute it to infants of his posterity could hardly be considered reasonable or just.³ In fact, such an act would be ever more severe than his treatment of devils who are responsible only for their actual sin and not the sin of another.⁴

¹Apology or Defence 13, 14.1-3. Notice *ibid.*, 13, 14.1 (NB, 1:318): "Since infants have not transgressed this covenant, they do not seem to be obnoxious to condemnation; unless we maintain that God is unwilling to treat with infants, who depart out of this life before they arrive at adult age, on that gracious condition under which, notwithstanding, they are also comprehended (*ut foederati*) as parties to the covenant; and therefore that their condition is much worse than that of adults, to whom is tendered the remission of all sins, not only of that which they perpetrated in Adam, but likewise, of those which they have themselves personally committed."

²*Ibid.*, 13, 14.1, 2.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.* Both sides claimed to have been misrepresented. The Synod of Dort would later proclaim: "It clearly appears that some, whom such conduct by no means became, have violated all truth, equity, and charity, in wishing to persuade the public: 'That the doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning predestination, and the points annexed to it, but its own genius and necessary tendency, leads off the minds of men from all piety and religion. . . . that the same doctrine teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary act of his will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation, and has created them for this very purpose; that in the same manner in which the election is the fountain and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety; that many children of the faithful are torn, guiltless, from their mothers' breasts, and tyrannically

The Federal View

The Post-Reformation development of covenant theology turned to a discussion of the ground and reason for man's involvement in Adam's sin.¹ These questions involved the nature of man's union with Adam,² and the nature of the imputation by which this sin was propagated to the race.³ The strict Federal answer to these questions was: by immediate, or direct, imputation man is guilty in Adam.

The roots of this theology can already be seen in the canons of the Synod of Dort (1619) which rejected the Arminian Remonstrance articles.⁴

plunged into hell." Canons of the Synod of Dort, Conclusion (Schaff, 3:596). Arminius, on the other hand, published his Apology or Defense in which he dealt with thirty-one articles ascribed to him which he chose either to deny or explain (see NB 1:276-379).

¹Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:192.

²Murray, Imputation of Adam's Sin, pp. 22-41.

³Ibid., pp. 42-70.

⁴Canons of the Synod of Dort, First Head 1 (Schaff, 3:581). Defending the traditional Reformed view of predestination the "First Head" at Dort stated: "As all men have sinned in Adam, lie under the curse, and are obnoxious to eternal death, God would have done no injustice by leaving them all to perish, and delivering them over to condemnation on account of sin, according to the words of the Apostle (Rom. iii.19), 'that every mouth may be stopped, and all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;' and (vi. 23), 'for the wages of sin is death.'" For Dort sin was not caused by God but by man, and salvation came through the free gift of God in Christ, by eternal decree (articles 5, 6). Originally man was created in the image of God with saving knowledge and complete holiness (third and fourth heads, article 1). Through Adam's Fall "a corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring," and since then every human being (but Christ) received "corruption from their original parent . . . by the propagation of a vicious nature" (article 2, emphasis supplied). The original Latin reads justo Dei iudicio, "in consequence of a just judgment of God," a statement that would be explained more precisely in the Helvetic Consensus Formula. A judicial act of God was involved. Thus the first sin resulted in Adam's posterity being conceived in sin—they "are by nature children of wrath," they are "incapable of any saying good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto" (article 3). Without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit man's depravity cannot be seriously altered in the sense of reform, though he still retains "the glimmerings of natural light" (article 4). These "glimmerings" explain why people are able to do something good (civil

The Canons of Dort proved to be a stabilizing force among the churches of Holland and provided somewhat of a model for the Westminster Confession which presented a more developed covenant theology, although covenant language was present at Dort as well. This framework developed over the next fifty years until the Helvetic Consensus Formula (1675) which presented a full Protestant scholasticism incorporating the Federal view of Adam.¹

The contention was based on the nature of the judicial act of God—how could God's justice be preserved in the light of what seemed arbitrary? In the developed Federal view Adam was perceived as a legal representative of the race² by whom (actually "in whom") sin was propagated to his posterity by direct imputation.³ The emphasis was on imputation as the method. While it is true that mankind inherits natural depravity from Adam, it is the actual guilt of Adam's sin that is directly imputed to mankind. And this is not to be understood as an inheritance by begetting (as in Augustine's theory), but rather as a judicial decree—a forensic act.⁴

righteousness) but they are also a witness to the fact that man cannot do anything perfectly good nor can he do anything credible toward being saved. The canons confirmed that children of believing parents, who die in infancy, should be considered elect of God, because of the terms of the "covenant of grace" (First Head 17).

¹See Leith, 308ff.

²Helvetic Consensus Formula 12 (Leith, 314). Cf. Canons of the Synod of Dort, Third and Fourth Heads 2 (Schaff, 3:588).

³Helvetic Consensus Formula 11, 12 (Leith, 314).

⁴*Ibid.*, 10 (Leith, 313): "We hold, therefore, that the sin of Adam is imputed by the mysterious and just judgment of God to all his posterity. . . . God, the supremely just Judge of all the earth, punishes none but the guilty." See also *Ibid.* 12. Cf. Thiessen, Lectures in systematic Theology, p. 188. Berkouwer writes, "no matter how the federalists try to combine peccatum proprium and peccatum alienum, the relativizing that is implicit in the words 'in a certain sense' compels them to understand 'imputation' as a forensic judgment of God. Therefore the federalists have been challenged

Direct imputation of Adam's sin was not considered an arbitrary judgment of God because Adam was not only the federal father of mankind but also his "natural one."¹

Inherited sin includes two things, imputed sin and inherent sin. Imputed sin consists in God's attributing Adam's guilt to all Adam's descendants, because of their natural descent from Adam (i.e., because of the natural unity of the human race in Adam), as their own guilt, as the guilt of their nature.²

Hence the ground of man's penalty for Adam's sin is his natural union with Adam.³ Yet because the theme of Romans is the imputation of

to show how such an imputation is in harmony with Scripture. How can we speak of an 'imputation' when we do not mean an active and a personal sinning in the fullest sense of the words?" Berkouwer, Sin, p. 459.

"To impute" means "to attribute," "to calculate," "to reckon," "to consider," from the Greek λογίζομαι. For a word study on this see New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, s.v. "Lead Astray, Deceive," by W. Günther. In theology "to impute sin" is to impute guilt which Hodge has called "the judicial obligation to satisfy justice." Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:194. Thus Federal Theology does not understand the imputation of man's sin to Christ as the latter's committing them. The notion is to imply that man, due to his natural connection, stands guilty of Adam's first sin, by imputation—"his sin is the judicial ground of condemnation of his race, precisely as the righteousness of Christ is the judicial ground of the faith of his people." Ibid., 2:195. "When Adam sinned, he acted as a representative of the human race. God imputed the guilt of the first sin to all those whom Adam represented, the entire human race." Ibid., 2:189. Theologians of the Reformed tradition ordinarily followed the creationist theory of the origin of the soul, which explained that with each new person born into the world a new soul was individually created by God. To create that soul sinful would do havoc to a sense of God's righteousness and render God responsible for sin, a concept that Reformed theology could never abide. Therefore, "for each new-begotten body God creates a soul and lets sin be so inherited in it, that He (1) attributes Adam's guilt to it (whereupon fails to bestow on it the gift of justitia originalis) and (2) imparts to it the state of corruption, which man's nature has descended through Adam's fall." Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 341. Heppe gives Cocceius' views on this which, he says, "all [theologians] teach"; (1) Each person receives the imputation of Adam's actual sin; (2) Each person receives deprivatio or the lack of uprightness with which he was created; (3) Each person receives a perverted mind; (4) Each person receives a bad conscience; and finally, (5) Each person receives a further immersion in sin.

¹Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:189.

²Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 331.

³Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:196. Warfield has explained the

Christ's saving righteousness, Federal Theology insists that it is imperative that how man obtains a sinful status be seen in the correct context. To deny direct imputation of a foreign sin would be to deny direct imputation of a foreign righteousness. To say that sin is intrinsic (or imitation) is tantamount to admitting that saving righteousness is an inherent entity and somehow militates against both Paul and the Protestant movement.¹ Thus in Federal Theology there is an organic relationship between three basic acts of imputation: (1) Adam's sin to his posterity; (2) Man's sins to Christ in his salvific work; (3) Christ's righteousness to believers.² It is as man

pluralism of Post-Reformation scholasticism on the basis of disagreement over the nature of imputation. In his Biblical and Theological Studies (p. 269ff.) Warfield gives the example from the Presbyterian Church in America where four theories of imputation were held (by prominent theologians): (1) immediate imputation, which ascribed a foreign (though related via corporate solidarity) sin to Adam's natural descendents; (2) mediate imputation, which insisted that man's participation in Adam's depravity is the grounds that makes such imputation legal, or merited; (3) realistic imputation where man actually participated in a common sin with Adam (based on a Reformed traducian approach), and (4) an agnostic approach which does not care about the theory of imputation or transmission. The Federal theologians major concern was to preserve Paul's meaning in Rom 5:12-21 with respect to the relation between Adam's sin and his posterity, especially as it relates to the context of the book of Romans in general. Cf. Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 334.

¹See Murray, Imputation of Adam's Sin, pp. 11-12, 17. Murray argues (p. 11): "He [Paul] is establishing [in Romans] the truth that men are justified and attain to life by what another has done, the one man Jesus Christ. How vacuous and contradictory would be any appeal to the parallel obtaining in the relation of Adam to the race if the Pelagian construction were that of Paul, namely, that men died simply because of their own sin and not at all on the ground of Adam's sin! Paul's doctrine of justification would be nullified if, at this point, the parallel he uses to illustrate and confirm it is after the pattern of the Pelagian construction. For it would mean that men are justified by their own voluntary action just as they came under condemnation solely by their own voluntary sin." Any understanding that Paul was referring to actual sin when he wrote in Romans 5:12, "in that all sinned," (ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον) would therefore destroy the basic gospel argument.

²Warfield, Biblical and Theological Studies, p. 263. Cf. Berkouwer, Sin, p. 452: "It is important to see that the Church has used the concept of imputatio not only in regard to original sin but especially in regard to the righteousness of Christ. Here we stand at the very heart of the

takes over this imputed sin in his life that it becomes actual.¹

From Calvinism, Federal Theology pursued the notion that man is enslaved to sin and is therefore free only to sin which he always does freely and with pleasure.² This enslavement is held to be a punishment for sin in that it brings the feeling of misery and finally death.³ Here Federal Theology became very specific—this punishment is three-fold: (1) spiritual death, which is properly conceived of as punishing "sin with sins";⁴ (2) corporeal death, which was introduced as the result of Adam's sin and would not otherwise have been experienced by mankind;⁵ and (3) eternal death, which secures the eternal separation from society and God.⁶ However, Reformed scholasticism did not see temporal and corporeal death as real punishment for the elect. Trials were for discipline and growth for those predestined for glory—every Christian must bear his cross.⁷

salvation of God: his unspeakable Gift of complete unmerited grace. The Church, in her confessions, has spoken of this imputation of Christ's righteousness in a very bold way. She has recognized, at this point, the reverse side of what Scripture calls the non-imputation of man's sin (cf. II Cor. 5:19; Ps. 32:1-2)."

¹Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 348.

²Ibid., p. 366.

³Ibid., p. 367.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.: "Like his spiritual death corporeal death is also a punishment of God for the sin of man.—Nature herself does not involve death; since death is the destruction of nature. Moreover God is absolutely good, can as little will death for death's sake, as for the sake of anything else. God can only have ordained death to punish sin. At once, hereby, since by death man is depressed to the lot of the other creatures, man's original power over creation is broken and his whole corporeal glory and blessedness undermined."

⁶Ibid., p. 368. This eternal death is perceived as the tortures of hell-fire.

⁷Ibid., pp. 369-370.

Baptism represents the removal of reatus, but concupiscentia mala lives on, though it is overpowered and controlled by the Spirit.¹ Infant baptism is administered in the light of the covenant relationship and has the meaning the Reformation gave it rather than the sacerdotal significance of the Augustinian tradition.²

The historical touchstone for Federal Theology was John Calvin. Much of his thought is developed, especially in the area of the covenant and imputation. However, an alternative to the question of direct imputation was offered by Joshua Placaesus (1606-1655) of Saumur (France).³

Mediate Imputation⁴

Placaesus (also known as La Place), a Reformed theologian, differed from the Federal view in holding that guilt for Adam's sin was not imputed to his posterity for this would only validate the charge of injustice and arbitrariness against God.⁵ So original sin was to be seen strictly as the

¹Ibid., p. 619.

²Ibid., p. 621. "But since the promises which God has made to believers hold not only for them but also for their seed, the Church is bound to baptize not only confessors of the name of Christ but also their infants, the children of Christians, exactly as the children of Israel were circumcized."

³Ibid., p. 348. For further study on the whole development of Federal Theology, see *ibid.*, pp. 320-370, and Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 449-465. For an incisive critique see Strong, Systematic Theology, pp. 612-616.

⁴Out of this theory of original sin the "New School" or the "New Divinity" view later developed in America. See Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 606. Strong generalizes the notion as the "Theory of Uncondemnable Vitiosity" which suggests the central principle that whatever corruption man inherits is not condemned by God. This principle has caused Federal theologians to reject the view as only "Arminianism in disguise" (Turretin). However, the earlier form of mediate imputation was formulated before the appearance of the Westminster Confession and was to develop into a central principle in the New Divinity of America. Furthermore, in its earlier form it saw depravity as condemnable. See *ibid.*, p. 617.

⁵Murray, Imputation of Adam's Sin, p. 47. For a brief survey of

depravity inherent in man as a consequence of Adam's involvement of the race in sin.¹

When his view was condemned by the Synod of Charenton (1644) Placaesus revised his doctrine, insisting that he had never formally rejected imputation but rather was really suggesting that imputation was to be considered as "mediate" rather than "immediate"—imputatio mediata et consequens as opposed to the Federal notion of imputatio immediata et antecedens.² Henceforth Placaesus taught essentially the same doctrine but varied the theological terminology, basing his view on the central principle that a person cannot be punished for another person's sin. Such a view would erode a viable case for God's justness.³

In short, Placaesus' view asserted the following: (1) the guilt accruing from Adam's first sin is not immediately imputed to his posterity; (2) man is born physically and morally depraved and therefore performs actual sin; and (3) this inherent depravity is "imputed" to man as sin.⁴

Where Federal Theology made the immediate imputation of Adam's guilt the cause of actual sin, Placaesus turned the idea on its head and insisted that actual sin is the cause of guilt. Hence, man's legal status becomes determined by his condition inherited from Adam.⁵ Guilt is in the

New England theologians who held this view see Strong, Systematic Theology, pp. 606-612.

¹Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 616.

²Berkouwer, Sin, p. 455.

³Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:213.

⁴Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 617; Hodge, Systematic Theology, 2:193.

⁵Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1941, p. 243.

wake of pollution¹ and death refers to the physical, spiritual, and eternal aspects of the sin man inherits by possessing a depraved nature.²

The Realistic View

Realism is the term used to designate a modern traducian form of Augustinianism.³ It held that sin, both guilt and corruption, is passed by "representation," or "imputation," either mediate or immediate.⁴ Thiessen has

¹Berkouwer, Sin, p. 264.

²What Placaesus was attempting to do was commendable. He felt that in Federal Theology (although it was not fully developed in his day) God was too arbitrary [often a problem with legal or forensic emphases in theology (see Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 455-456)]. Thus in viewing the imputation as somehow connected with man's own responsibility he sought to take the blame for original sin off God. Berkouwer's criticism must be considered: what Placaesus essentially did was to destroy any real notion of imputation and he did not satisfactorily answer the question why one should see the consequences of sin imputed but not the cause, and Federal theologians criticize his view for failing to see what they consider to be important issues of Scripture (ibid., pp. 454-455). Strong writes: "Since the origination of this corrupt nature cannot be charged to account of man, man's inheritance of it must be regarded in the light of an arbitrary divine infliction—a conclusion which reflects upon the justice of God. Man is not only condemned for a sinfulness of which God is the author, but is condemned without any real probation, either individual or collective." Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 618. Placaesus' view nevertheless secured many followers and is seen as central to the later discussion in American theology.

³See Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:168-257, for a fully explained rationale for modern Realism. Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 436ff., discusses the American Shedd and European theologians S. Greijdanus and K. Schilder as modern proponents of this view. For a critique of Realism, see Murray, Imputation of Adam's Sin, pp. 24-36. Strong lists Realism as "the Augustinian theory, or Theory of Adam's Natural Headship," and traces its roots through Tertullian, Hilary, Ambrose, and the Reformers (except for Zwingli). See Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 619. The Realistic view demonstrates a persistence of the original Augustinian theory to survive, and though not all early American theologians who held this view could be characterized as mighty exponents as the late W. G. T. Shedd (1820-1894) who led out as its modern champion, its component notions can be traced through much of the New England setting in which the Advent movement was born. Shedd, for example, constantly appeals to Edwards and the earlier Westminster Confession and Catechisms.

⁴See Berkouwer, Sin, pp. 436-437. The doctrine of original sin has traditionally attempted to "expose and eliminate the alibi" with regard

summarized the view as follows:

On this view the human race was naturally and substantially in Adam when Adam sinned. In this first sin, man became corrupt and guilty, and this state was transmitted to Adam's descendants. There was an impersonal and unconscious participation by all of Adam's progeny in this first sinful act. Thus, because man was numerically one, the common, unindividualized nature committed the first sin. All men are co-sinners with Adam. In this way sin can be justly imputed and man can be justly condemned because he participated in the sin.¹

Briefly, this view has all the intricacies of the Old Augustinianism, including original guilt which was passed on through natural generation.² Romans 5:12 means "in Adam," and imputational views, divorced from "real" inheritance, are simply inadequate (according to Realism) to explain the ramification or breadth of a truly Biblical view on the effect of Adam's original sin.³ While euphemisms may be invoked to tone down the "guilt" of

to sin, that is, to make it impossible for man to justify himself in any way regarding his involvement with guilt. Berkouwer suggests that realism has sought to accomplish three ends: (1) to define original sin in such a concretized way that it does not simply say that man was connected to Adam's first sin "in a certain sense" (Bavinck); (2) to expose any alibi in an emphatic way; and (3) to eliminate any valid justification or escape from peccatum alienum (ibid. p. 437). "The realists have wanted to do away with any concept of alibi and to point to the naked facts of man's own guilt" [peccatum proprium]. Ibid.

¹Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, p. 188.

²Berkouwer describes the "hallmark of realism" as the notion that men co-sinned "with Adam in the fullest sense of that word." Berkouwer, Sin, p. 438. The sin of man, unindividualized in Adam, was real sin—actual human sin. Ibid., p. 439.

³Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 2:186: "The first sin of Adam, being a common, not an individual sin, is deservedly and justly imputed to the posterity of Adam upon the same principles upon which all sin is deservedly and justly imputed: namely, that it was committed by those to whom it is imputed. 'All men die, because all men sinned,' says St. Paul. Free agency is supposed, as the reason for the penalty of death: namely, the free agency of all mankind in Adam. This agency, though differing in the manner, is yet as real as the subsequent free agency of each individual.

"The imputation either of Adam's sin or of Christ's righteousness must rest upon a union of some kind. It is just to impute the first sin of Adam to his posterity. While it would be unjust to impute it to the fallen

Adam passed on to his posterity, the fact remains that man dies because he is "guilty," i.e., punishment follows in the natural order from original sin.¹

Sin began in self-seeking, and pride is the mother of all sin.² Inclination was born when Adam believed a lie, and from that inclination came the acts of sin.³ In the general nature this has ever been so. Corruption is inherited and is synonymous with guilt.⁴ Separation caused by guilt resulted and continues to result in actual sin—it is inevitable, predictable, and inescapable.⁵ It affects the understanding and the consciousness of divine things in human minds and is manifested in its effects on the will by enmity, hatred, hardness of heart, aversion, obstinacy, and bondage.⁶ Babies die in infancy because of their guilt obtained from

angels; because Adam and his posterity were a unity when the first sin was committed, but Adam and the fallen angels were not."

¹Ibid., p. 187: "Inherited corruption is visited with Divine retribution, according to Eph. 2.3. And this requires participation in the origin of it. Men must sin in Adam, in order to be justly punished for Adam's sin. And participation requires union with Adam." What other term explains the reality of the situation? Ibid., pp. 191-192: "The first sin of every man must have been committed either: (a) in Adam. (b) In the womb. (c) In infancy. We cannot conceive of any relation to, or connection with self-consciousness, in the last two cases. We can in the first. For the individuals Adam and Eve were self-conscious. So far as they were concerned, the first sin was a very deliberate and intensely wilful act. The human species existing in them at that time acted in their act, and sinned in their sin, similarly as the hand or eye acts and sins in the murderous or lustful act of the individual soul. The hand or the eye has no separate self-consciousness of its own, parallel with the soul's self-consciousness. Taken by itself, it has no consciousness at all. But its union and oneness with the self-conscious soul, in the personal union of soul and body, affords all the self-consciousness that is possible in the case. The hand is co-agent with the soul, and hence is particeps criminis and has a common guilt with the soul."

²Ibid., p. 169.

³Ibid., p. 170.

⁴Ibid., p. 199.

⁵Ibid., pp. 169-170.

⁶Ibid., pp. 196-198.

Adam.¹ If it were not for culpability really inherited from Adam, infants should need no redemptive work of Christ.²

Shedd preserved infant baptism on the same basis as other Reformed theologians: a child of a believer in covenant-relationship with God obtains "regenerating grace."³ Any child who dies before the "age of self-consciousness" is regenerated, though one who lives through that period may renounce his "regeneration."⁴ Baptism is therefore a sign of regeneration and covenant life, rather than a sacramental, metaphysical reality as it was in the older Augustinianism.⁵

Considerations for the Present Investigation

In tracing the development of the doctrine of original sin through the Christian era, this investigation has recognized several schools of thought in which various Christian thinkers have used a variety of combinations of traditional and Scriptural data to attempt to answer questions about the effect of Adam's sin on his posterity.

It has been largely an endeavor to understand the New Testament, but as one can readily see, none of these thinkers worked in a vacuum. Manichaeism, Gnosticism, Platonism, Judaism, and other outside forces have

¹Ibid., pp. 187, 199-200.

²Ibid., p. 200: "If there be no guilt in natural depravity, Christ comes to the infant 'by water only,' and not 'by blood;' by sanctification, and not by justification. Infant redemption implies that the infant has guilt as well as pollution. The infant has a rational soul; this soul has a will; this will is inclined; this inclination, like that of an adult, is centered on the creature instead of the Creator. This is culpable, and needs pardon. It is also pollution, and needs removal."

³Ibid., p. 576.

⁴Ibid., p. 577.

⁵This view is mainly an elaboration of the view set forth in the Westminster Confession (see 28.1-7).

readily affected the thinking of men like Justin, Cyprian, Augustine, Luther, etc. Existential factors also played a part. Great contrasts can be seen not only between the view of Pelagius and Augustine but in their backgrounds as well.

This survey of the traditional treatment of the Biblical material reveals that there is a primary recognition of the basic undoneness of man but a lack of unanimity as to how one is to connect that undoneness causatively to Adam's sin. In summary it is helpful to note that theologians have grappled with questions in the following anthropological and soteriological areas:

1. Death and Guilt. The fact that all who come into this world eventually die raises serious theological questions of cause and effect. If a person is not guilty of Adam's sin, why does he die? This question is particularly pertinent with reference to those under the age of reasonable accountability. Does universal death indicate that babies are held culpable of moral infraction and therefore recipients of that judgment? This question is foremost in the debates on original sin.

2. Depravity. The relationship of man's general moral depravity to Adam's sin or to individual sins is a second consideration in this discussion. How is such depravity transmitted?

3. Will. In what way man's will has been affected in Adam is a third area of debate. Is man's will free? Is sin a matter of the mind or the will, e.g., does one have the liberty (but not the power) to live righteously? What did man lose at the Fall that affects him now?

4. Propensities and sinful inclinations. Do these biases to sin indicate an estranged heritage from Adam? Are they to be considered properly called sin, or a consequence of sin, or a punishment for sin?

5. Estrangement and alienation. In this notion, built on the view that sin separates from God, serious questions are raised. Does one suffer estrangement for Adam's sin or for one's own personal sin? If a person is born estranged from God, how is his/her salvation status affected? Is he/she born "lost," "innocent," "guilty," or "holy"? Is there some kind of racial-estrangement traceable to Adam in which man naturally finds himself/herself hopelessly caught?

6. Responsibility. How does one suffer for another's sin? This raises the theo-centric problem of justice. If God administers death on the basis of Adam's sin how can he be considered just?

7. Regeneration. The fact that regeneration is available raises the question of inevitable need. The doctrine of the new birth therefore becomes a focal issue in the discussion of original sin and indwelling sin.

8. Sin as a state, condition, act. Is there some way in which sin must be viewed as a state? Is there Scriptural support for a concept of "sin" versus "sins"? The discussion leads one to ask, when does one become a sinner? Does one exhibit a sinful attitude because of his condition? or is he in the sinful condition because of the present attitude he displays?

9. Sinners by birth. There is Biblical material that describes man as "born in sin." Therefore theology has considered the question of the status of babies and children under the age of moral or reasonable accountability. How does one reconcile the death of babies with the doctrine of salvation? Are babies saved or lost in infant death?

10. Victory. Pertinent questions for moral, experiential victory are implied in a concept of original sin, namely, how does one get rid of this taint? Is this eradication something merely for the next world? or has God established some method by which it is overcome here?

11. Physical and relational world views of sin. Perhaps at the root of the entire discussion is the basic nature of sin. Is sin primarily a physical concept as the Augustinian tradition would seem to imply? Or is sin to be considered rather the result of an estranged relationship?

Identifying the schools of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Pelagius, Augustine, Trent, Arminius, and Federal Theology is meant to be more than an academic exercise. In the remainder of this study, SDA theology is compared to these models. The concerns of Adventist writers and thinkers must be subjected to these traditional norms to determine with whom affinity lies and how that affinity was established. Consideration is given to the above eleven questions as well in the course of the study.

It is here postulated that Adventism too demonstrates that theology is not done within a vacuum; that the early theology of Adventism reflects the surroundings of New England in which Adventism was born. Once this has been established as fact, the present task of theology should receive clearer focus with regard to how normative the pioneers should be considered on this question.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS FOR THE ADVENTIST POSITION

It is helpful to view American religion in the light of the American spirit that yearns to be free from inordinate restraint. That spirit entails individualism, frontiersman-type ruggedness, and a kind of superficial claim to expertise in all things. America was the place, so the dream went, where man could finally achieve his goal (provided he worked hard enough), because he was allowed the liberty to pursue it.¹ It seemed inevitable that in America the mind would be set free. That freedom included the liberty to re-evaluate traditional credal thinking in the light of a modern age.

The America of the early 1800s was a strange mixture of upheaval and identity-building.² It was a kind of setting that lent itself to what Ahlstrom has termed "a sectarian heyday."³ A new wave of revivalism,

¹See William A. Emerson, Sin and the New American Conscience (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 113-115; and Martin E. Marty, Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America (New York: Dial Press, 1970), pp. 188-198.

²See Winthrop S. Hudson, "A Time of Religious Ferment," in The Rise of Adventism, ed. Edwin Scott Gaustad (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 1-17.

³Sydney A. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 472. Ahlstrom shows four forms taken by sectarian revivalism of this period: (1) Perfectionism—especially in the form of the second blessing theories of ultra-Arminianism; (2) Millennialism with its emphasis on the imminent revelation of God's kingdom by way of the second advent of Christ; (3) Universalism—a reaction to predestinarian Calvinism; (4) Illuminism—the concept that God has bestowed "new light" in these latter days (*ibid.*, pp. 476-490). To some degree all of these forces were at work in the sectarian movements and

through the efforts of Charles Finney, helped to fan the flame into what has come to be called the Second Great Awakening.¹ Revivalism, coupled with popular American pragmatism, produced a seedbed for popular religion. Ahlstrom describes the role and result of the revivalism of the period:

It was by far the dominant religious movement of the period, and it served in many ways to open channels for diverse kinds of innovation and disruption. Put most simply, the "new measures" weakened the old measures; traditional church ways were directly challenged. This wrenching occurred among old "magisterial denominations" like the Presbyterians as well as among the Baptists who in many areas (notably in Rhode Island and around Philadelphia) had lived down their sectarian past. On the intellectual level, revivalism also served mightily to undermine doctrinal moorings, emphasizing personal freedom. The cry went up against hierarchies, seminary professors, dry learning, "hireling ministers," unconverted congregations, and cold formalism. Geographic localities, congregations, ministers, and individual laymen assumed new prerogatives. Farmers became theologians, offbeat village youths became bishops, odd girls became prophets.²

Revivalism created a new appreciation of the Scriptures. Furthermore, since American religion and theology tend to be closely related, the time was right not only to spawn the movement but to spread it.³ SDA eschatology later compared the Advent movement to an Elijah and a John the Baptist arising in the midst of upheaval to call the people to prepare for

certainly this was true of the SDA movement. Cf. Martin E. Marty, Protestantism (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972), pp. 86-97.

¹William G. McLoughlin, "Revivalism," in The Rise of Adventism, ed. Gaustad, pp. 119-121.

²Ahlstrom, Religious History of the American People, p. 475. To a great extent the Second Great Awakening was anti-Calvinistic in reaction to the excesses of the First Great Awakening. The term "old orthodoxy" is frequently to be understood as Calvinism and is used polemically. See Edwin Scott Gaustad, The Great Awakening in New England (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957), p. 126ff. Cf. Jonathan Butler, "Seventh-day Adventism's Legacy of Modern Revivalism," Spectrum 1 (1973):89-99.

³Heick describes American theology as "preachable" and contrasts it especially with German theology where scholars are not necessarily involved either in pastoring or preaching. See Heick, History of Christian Thought, 2:407.

the day of the Lord.¹ While that divine call involved an eschatological mission it was also an invitation to return to the Bible and to renounce tradition or credalism.²

With regard to the history of the doctrine of original sin, SDAs came on the American scene toward the end of a protracted attack on Federal Theology by dissenting elements, which terminated in a drastically altered view of the doctrine. In his Princeton Seminary Lectures of 1951, H. Sheldon Smith observed that the early New England theologians had made the doctrine of original sin the "chief theme of controversy" in their theology for nearly a century.³ Being born in the wake and very geographical bosom of this hundred-year debate, SDAs could scarcely escape its direct or residual effects.

¹For Ellen White's comments on the "Elijah Message," see Francis David Nichol, ed., Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (Washington: Review and Herald, 1957), 4:1184.

²The Reformers had issued a similar call to come out of the credalism of Rome. Now, in 18th- and 19th-century Protestantism, there was to be seen the results of another slippage into credalism. Many who made up the dissenting elements in American religion felt that the study of theology, the practice of religion, each in turn had become restricted by creeds rather than vitalized by them. On the other hand, forty years down the road, another drift would be seen—this time toward empirical and evolutionary approaches to religion and theology. Hence, the period of time known as the first half of the 19th century looked like a place where Scripture could hold some sway. Seventh-day Adventists interpret their movement as providential partly because of this. Nonetheless, this is not to suggest that America was an unadulterated Bible belt; history shows that in the 17th and 18th centuries there was a major clash of old Calvinism with Anabaptist, Arminian, Quaker, Socinian, and Pelagian thought. This clash resulted in the seedbed of new thought and the shaking of the old establishment. See Heick, History of Christian Thought, 2:406, and H. Shelton Smith, Changing Conceptions of Original Sin: A Study in American Theology Since 1750 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), pp. 10-12.

³Smith, Changing Conceptions, p. x. Cf. John D. Hannah, "The Doctrine of Original Sin in Postrevolutionary America," Bibliotheca Sacra (July-September 1977):245.

The New England Milieu

The Westminster Confession had crossed the sea to the new world and its position on original sin formed the "vital element" of early American preaching.¹ The view of immediate imputation as held by Federal Theology was for a time pressed to its limit in the revivalistic preaching of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) and Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790).² However, this theology was really an extension of that developed in scholastic Protestantism (since formulating new thought was not a primary concern of the colonial Puritans). Of chief interest to early America was freedom from religio-political control. The real American "spirit" was born in this quest, and congregationalism was its mode.³

Nevertheless, freedom from religious traditions is not easy to achieve for it involves not only changing from conditioned living but from conditioned thinking as well (or vice versa). For early America to be freed from tradition required the acceptance of new European philosophy and free thought. This was not only true in the political construction of the new country, it was also true in the area of theology. A new frontier helped to this end and with the Enlightenment in progress on the continent and in England, it was probably inevitable that new thought would eventually affect the colonies.⁴

After centuries of theologians' attempts to soften the western legacy of Augustine, and after another century of theological domination by

¹Smith, Changing Conceptions, p. 6.

²Ibid., p. 7. Again it should be noted that American preaching and American theology were virtually inseparable during this period. See Heick, History of Christian Thought, 2:407.

³Smith, Changing Conceptions, p. 1.

⁴See Hannah, "Doctrine of Original Sin in Postrevolutionary America," pp. 240-243.

Federal Theology in New England, the time was ripe for agitation toward change with respect to the doctrine of original sin. Smith places this period of intense agitation at 1740-1870.¹ And the Advent movement was to feel the impact of this change of view with powerful force. This impact materialized in a rather surprising way and entered the movement as an inherited presuppositional notion attached to basic Christian anthropology rather than soteriology. The purpose here is to reconstruct the avenue through which this concept entered the thinking of significant thought leaders in the movement.

John Locke and John Taylor

Two free thinkers, both Englishmen, were of great importance in their effect on new world thinking. John Locke (1632-1704) was both a philosopher and a Christian, as well as a son of the Enlightenment. Locke promoted a simplified Christianity consisting of belief in Jesus and living a good life.² Philosophically he was an empiricist who approached life from the vantage point of reason's superiority.³ This together with (or because of) his view of man's inheritance consisting of a tabula rasa, i.e., an absence of innate ideas, contributed to his entire treatment of religious

¹See Smith, Changing Conceptions, pp. 10ff.

²These sentiments are expressed in his The Reasonableness of Christianity. Clapp has described Locke as "a sincere Christian, who tried to diminish the flourishing schisms and sects by proposing a return to the Scriptures and an abandonment of the interminable theological disputes of his day. He accepted the divine inspiration of the Bible. Nevertheless, he held that even revelation must be tested by reason." Encyclopedia of Philosophy, s.v. "John Locke," by James Gordon Clapp. Cf. Thomas P. Neill, Makers of the Modern Mind (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1958), p. 126.

³See Jack B. Rogers and Forrest Baird, Introduction to Philosophy (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), p. 93.

freedom and religion in general.¹ He advocated religious toleration from a pragmatic base and showed a general disdain for creeds and theological inquiry.² However, in this he did not depreciate the importance of the Bible but insisted on a reasonable faith derived from Scripture.³ In the train of these presuppositions came the courage to challenge many of the existing theological assumptions of old Calvinism.⁴

Regardless of the areas of thought in which Adventists may have disagreed with Locke, they found commonality with him in his opposition to those Calvinistic doctrines such as eternal misery, immortality of the soul, and double predestination. They would later praise Locke as "that great Christian philosopher."⁵ Concomitant with these views was Locke's notion of death and its relation to Adam's sin. His emphasis was on deprivation: Adam lost the tree of life, was excluded from paradise, and experienced a death which was a "ceasing to be," not eternal "misery." In short, Adam and his posterity became dying beings, "exposed to the toil, anxiety, and frailties of this mortal life." Because of Adam's sin man ends in dust with "no more life or sense than the dust had."⁶

¹Leroy Edwin Froom, Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers (Washington: Review and Herald, 1965), 2:187-189.

²Neill, Makers of the Modern Mind, pp. 126-127.

³Froom, Conditionalist Faith, 2:188.

⁴For Locke, a doctrine that defied reason's basic moral perceptions was probably not Scriptural either; thus basic Calvinistic doctrines such as eternal punishing in hell, immortality of the soul, double predestination were irrelevant and false, i.e., misperceptions of Biblical truth. See D. M. Canright, "The Immortality of the Soul," Review and Herald 53:22 (May 29, 1879):169. Cf. Froom, Conditionalist Faith, 2:187.

⁵Canright, "Immortality of the Soul," p. 169.

⁶These quotes are cited by Canright in *ibid.*, from Locke's work entitled, The Reasonableness of Christianity (1695).

A second voice that had significant impact for change in America's struggle with the doctrine of original sin was John Taylor's (1694-1761). His polemic against the doctrine, entitled The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin Proposed to Free and Candid Examination, appeared in 1740 and eventually provoked answers from both Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley.¹ Smith has shown that Taylor proved to be the "greatest foreign foe of Federalist anthropology in New England."²

Taylor's attack was two-pronged: Biblical and philosophical (rationalistic). Biblically, Taylor objected that Federal Theology was inadequate on five counts:³ (1) There is no specific revelation that clarifies the death of Adam to be more than a physical or temporal death. Obviously this position flew directly in the face of the classical Reformed creeds, especially the Westminster Confession, which had delineated the death of Adam to be miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal, and that for a penalty of the Fall, Adam's posterity had suffered the same.⁴ (2) While the posterity of Adam can be said to suffer afflictions and mortality which come in the wake of Adam's sin, Scripture never clearly states that these are to be viewed as "punishments" brought on mankind for Adam's sin, since punishment implies guilt, and neither Scripture nor reason allows justice to be maintained in a situation where one person suffers for the guilt of another's crime on an

¹Smith, Changing Conceptions, pp. 13-14. Cf. Hannah, "Original Sin in Postrevolutionary America," p. 241, and David Weddle, "Jonathan Edwards on Men and Trees, and the Problem of Solidarity," Harvard Theological Review 67 (1974):158.

²Smith, Changing Conceptions, p. 13.

³This section is a brief summary of Smith's conclusions in his chapter, "The Impact of John Taylor," in *ibid.*, pp. 10-36. Primary source references can be found on pp. 15-19.

⁴See Westminster Confession of Faith 6.6.

involuntary basis. (3) The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden was actually a blessing of God since it restricted the spread and strength of sin. Such a move was designed to deter and limit sin.¹ (4) Just as all mankind lose their physical life in Adam, so all mankind gain back their physical life in Christ at the resurrection when all are brought to account for their own personal sins. (5) Rom 5:12-21 is concerned only with the loss of mortal life, as the result of a judicial act of God in consequence of Adam's transgression. Any further interpretation which entails spiritual and eternal "death" is beyond the scope of Paul's understanding.

Taylor's philosophical objections to this Federal Theology tended to parallel his Scriptural arguments: (1) Adam was not created in a state of original righteousness but with a capacity for righteousness—a kind of middle nature.² (2) Character is non-creatable and is understood as a learned response that results from the individual's making of proper decisions. (3) An analysis of the events of the Fall demonstrate that the Garden of Eden was designed for moral beginners, a fact that tends to support Taylor's view of character development. (4) The doctrine of sin or guilt from one individual's act imputed to another's innocence is absurd and such guilt is "imaginary" at best. (5) The notion of an inherited sinful nature is also absurd—one cannot inherit another's sinful condition so as to be held accountable for the guilt involved. This principle also applies to "taint,"

¹There are shades of Irenaeus thought here (see above, p. 67), as well as that of Gregory of Nazianzus (see above, p. 86). There is no evidence that this connection was intentional on the part of Taylor.

²Again one can draw parallels with early Christian views (see above, pp. 62, 67-68).

or "propensity," consequently neither of those can properly be called sin.¹

Taylor then concluded

that upon the Sin of Adam God subjected him and his Posterity to Sorrow, Labour and death; from which Death we are delivered, and are restored to Life at the Resurrection, by the Grace of God, having Respect to the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ.²

In his view Taylor saw contemporary man as born neither righteous nor sinful but capable of either, and man becomes sinful by making evil choices in response to natural appetites and passions, i.e., by imitation of Adam. Taylor's undergirding concern was to cast God in a becoming light, i.e., as a just God, and he was convinced that the Federal theologians' treatment of sin had gone far to damage God's reputation.

Response to Taylor

The New England debate on original sin, especially as it relates to the damage done to Federal Theology by John Taylor's views, has been chronicled by Smith and there is no point in repeating that here, except in a brief summary which reveals the outcome.

First, the debate was one that was fought essentially between Calvinists.³ Old Calvinism, on the one hand, was fighting to retain supremacy, while preachers and schoolmen who were tinctured with a sensitivity to the modern age (viz., the Enlightenment) were attempting to hold on to their faith by modifying it to meet the questions of modern thought.⁴ Taylor was far too extreme for seventeenth-century Calvinism in

¹Smith, Changing Conceptions, pp. 16-17.

²Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 16.

³This is not meant to overlook the Unitarian challenge which continually kept Calvinism agitated. See *ibid.*, pp. 72ff.

⁴Smith explains the Federal Doctrine of Original Sin in his first chapter and shows how it had developed in New England. He explains in his

general, but even Jonathan Edwards, father of the New England Theology, was not insensitive to the new age.¹

Second, the debate resulted in the virtual demise of the domination of old Federal Theology with regard to the doctrine of imputed sin. The result of this mortal blow to imputationism was thoroughly incorporated in New England Theology by the time Adventist leaders moved into prominence. For them to defend the old doctrine would have been perceived (by them) as cutting against a non-traditional trend toward a kind of Biblical purity. In fact, it would have been to attempt a reinstatement of credalism which was a direction opposite from that to which they were headed.

Thirdly, the debate centered in a deep concern for the character of God.² This battle was largely fought in the arena of God's treatment relative to the fate of infants born in original sin. Preserving and rightly

summary: "These representative assertions of the leading preachers in the Great Awakening [Jonathan Dickinson, Joseph Bellamy, Gilbert Tennant, Samuel Davies] demonstrate that the Federal idea of the human predicament was a living element in the faith of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches at the middle of the eighteenth century. Since these two bodies contained the vast majority of the Protestants of this period, one may confidently affirm that Puritan Calvinism dominated the theology of colonial Protestantism." Ibid., pp. 8-9. Smith proceeds to show the spread of Taylor's Enlightenment views and the response, in his subsequent chapters 3-8.

¹Hannah has shown the nature of the changing conceptions of the doctrine of original sin through the works of Timothy Dwight, Jonathan Edwards (the younger), and Nathanael Taylor. He demonstrates that New England Theology was a theological synthesis of Calvinism and Rationalism, and that this synthesis can be seen most clearly in its treatment of the original-sin question. See his diagram: "Original Sin in Postrevolutionary America," p. 245. Cf. Weddle, "Jonathan Edwards on Men and Trees," pp. 155-175.

²The great controversy theme of Adventism featuring God's attempt to demonstrate, through the plan of salvation, his justice and mercy in the balanced fashion of his character, fits well with this preoccupation of the times. Throughout the writings of Ellen G. White, the most representative of SDA writers, one sees this driving concern to represent God's character in the most congenial way possible. See Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1911), pp. 492-504.

representing the character of God came to entail protecting him from any theory that he adopts absurd methods in his relations with man, e.g., holding man culpable for something he had no voluntary part in. The result was, on the part of most New England theologians, especially New Haven thinkers,¹ a wide acceptance of the Placean view of imputation, or mediate imputation (as opposed to the Calvinistic immediate imputation).²

¹New England Theology is a term scholars give to the thought that arose in the Edwardsean tradition. It was the conservative, "orthodox," evangelical tradition of the 1700s, inspired primarily by Jonathan Edwards and his followers. Following the death of Edwards the movement tended to dwindle until the early 19th century when a second great awakening occurred. New Haven theology developed within this tradition, particularly at Yale University under the leadership of Timothy Dwight, and Nathanael Taylor. Ahlstrom relates this development to the popular movements of the day: "As expounded by various Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist theologians, 'New Schoolism' became, in effect, the ecumenical theology of nonsectarian revivalism, the Sunday School movement, foreign and domestic missions, and wide array of organized reform activities, notably the temperance crusade. It was frankly Arminian in its modifications of predestinarian dogma, vigorous in its emphasis on conversion and personal holiness, immensely moralistic in its definition of the good life, strong in millennial [sic] fervor, determined to make a model of America's Protestant democracy, and belligerently suspicious of Roman Catholicism both as a rapidly growing church and as a possible influence on Christian belief and practice.

"The activistic evangelical tradition in which [Nathanael] Taylor found his audience was often narrow in its vision and fiercely anti-intellectual. To a tragic degree its rank and file became alienated from the century's revolutionary developments in science, scholarship, and philosophy." Sydney E. Ahlstrom, ed., Theology in America: The Major Protestant Voices From Puritanism to Neo-Orthodoxy (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967), p. 45. Cf. Ahlstrom, Religious History of the American People, pp. 415-428.

²A primary example of this can be seen in the eminent New Haven theologian and Yale Divinity School professor, Nathanael Taylor (1786-1858), who attested that moral depravity is not to be perceived as an attribute of the soul created by God, nor as sinful nature which was brought on man "by acting his [Adam's] act," nor does it "consist in any constitutional propensities" in man's nature, nor any "excitement in these propensities," nor "any disposition or tendency to sin, which is the cause of all sin." See Nathanael Taylor, "Concio Ad Clerum: A Sermon: On Human Nature, Sin and Freedom [1828]," in Ahlstrom, Theology in America, p. 215. By "propensities" Taylor meant such natural drives as hunger, thirst, etc. These may be yielded to in a depraved way, he held, so as to submit to the occasion of temptation. Propensities were not sin but leanings toward sin. By this Taylor could keep sin "voluntary" by nature. Depravity, he wrote, "is man's

This New England concern to maintain the moral and intellectual integrity of God was also shared by the early Adventists, as will be seen later in this study, especially in Adventist conditionalism. In the early SDA treatment of original sin, arguments that had been circulating through New England for a century by the time of the Advent movement were employed

own act, consisting in a free choice of some object rather than God, as his chief good—or a free preference of the world and of worldly good, to the will and glory of God. . . . This forbidden choice of unworldly good, this preference of the low and sordid pleasure of the earth to God and his glory—this love of the world which excludes the love of the Father—this—this is man's depravity. This is that evil treasure of the heart, from which proceed evil things; this is the foundation, the source of all other abominations—man's free, voluntary preference of the world as his chief good, amid the revealed glories of a perfect God" (ibid., pp. 217, 222).

Man is depraved "by nature" but "nature" is not sin. It is man's nature to "sin and only sin in all the appropriate circumstances" of his being (ibid., p. 222). Man is born depraved by nature but his sin is voluntary, and thus he corrupts himself and is held accountable. Just as a lion eats flesh by nature, man sins by nature. But "eating flesh" is not synonymous with the nature of the lion. Sin must ever be viewed as voluntary in character so that man remains solely responsible for his sin. Sin is imputed to the depraved nature when it commits responsible, actual sin.

With regard to infants Taylor reasoned on this principle: that infants dying before the committing of their first sin "should be saved through the redemption of Christ" (ibid., p. 232). It is a moot question when moral accountability occurs but Taylor asserted it was "very early." And if there was an unquestionable case of non-accountability then his answer was: "He [the unaccountable infant] may be saved; in my belief he is saved, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If you ask, how can this be? I reply, he belongs to a race who by nature, in all the circumstances of their immortal being without the grace of this redemption, will sin. Place an infant then from his birth under the influence of the most perfect example and instructions—yea place him amid heaven's purity and heaven's sons, and who shall say that he will not, without the supernatural grace of God's Spirit, be a depraved sinner and fall under condemnation? When made meet therefore for the celestial paradise and admitted there, his song may tell of the grace that brought him to its glories" (ibid., pp. 233-234).

Taylor's approach is purely hamartiological. He sees no reason to approach anthropology from the direction of conditionalism as did Locke and John Taylor who held essentially the same view of sin. In fact, he finishes his sermon with a passionate appeal which depicts an eternal hell awaiting the stubborn rebellion of unresponsive man (ibid., pp. 241-242). And he affirms that to accept his view of sin does not entail any desire to introduce "an anti-orthodox peculiarity" (ibid., p. 236). By preserving the voluntary nature of sin and yet affirming its radical nature, as stemming from Adam in the form of depravity by nature, while invoking the mediate imputational scheme, Taylor is sure that he has preserved the goodness of God and maintained his integrity (ibid., p. 237).

to this end. Apparently these arguments had been preached for so long on a popular level (or, to use Ahlstrom's description, as "the ecumenical theology of the nonsectarian revival"),¹ that many had uncritically accepted them as essential elements in a theology that represented the true teaching of Scripture. This conclusion is partially supported by the fact that SDAs normally set forth their arguments as "the Biblical view," or as "the truth." In some cases they assume them, and while they often take issue with "orthodox" Christianity, it is really the old Calvinism they most often mean. The same kind of polemical approaches were common among the New England, New Haven, and the "New" (Liberal or Modernist) theologians.

The final outcome of the New England debates over original sin resulted largely in a gradual slide to liberalism by the close of the century.² Among the churches of America, Adventism looks very conservative by 1900 in the light of the popular drift away from traditional understandings of Scripture and into modernism.³

¹Ahlstrom, Theology in America, p. 45.

²See Smith, Changing Conceptions, pp. 164-197.

³If a thorough analysis of this were done to determine cause, Ellen White would undoubtedly be found to be the stabilizing element in Seventh-day Adventism. Before SDAs came on the scene the slide to credalism had resulted in a degree of extra-Biblical speculation and theological development which stimulated a reactive movement to return to the Bible. Ellen White, in her prophetic role, appealed to SDAs to remain true to that return and her counsels continually uphold the supremacy of Scripture and sanctified reason in the determination of theology. Continued input from contemporary, and especially German philosophy, resulted in a New England movement of modernism which is usually called by historians the "New Theology." It was begun, or at least fueled, by Horace Bushnell (1802-1876) and saw Christianity more as a subjective phenomenon, much in the tradition of Schleiermacher. For a discussion of Bushnell with regard to original sin and depravity, see E. Clinton Gardner, "Horace Bushnell's Doctrine of Depravity," Theology Today 12 (April 1955):10-26, and Smith, Changing Conceptions, pp. 137-163. SDAs were virtually unaffected by this move toward modernism. And it seems evident that the presence of a person perceived to be a modern messenger of God, or recipient of the spiritual gift of prophecy, largely contributed to impeding this slide. The divine validation of the Protestant

Adventist Epistemology

As a final step in observing the early Adventist milieu, it is helpful also to note some factors that would have an influence on the epistemology of the Advent movement. The critical spirit, so characteristic of American revivalism, was also evident in the primitive literature of the SDAs. During the formative period of the church's development, this spirit found expression in (1) polemic statements against (a) tradition, or (b) creeds, and (2) light, intimidating sarcasms about educated, learned, or seminary-trained professors of religion.

Heresy Lists

A common practice of early Adventism was to list the corruptions of Bible truth made by "Babylon." A typical example is the list of J. N. Andrews in 1855 which warned of nine misleading views.¹ Among them were included: the natural immortality of the soul,² the traditional doctrine

principle of sola scriptura, that SDAs perceived to have come through Ellen White, also preserved the literalistic approach to Adam and Eve, the Genesis story in general, and to Scripture as a whole. Thus the raw materials for a literalistic approach to original sin remained intact.

¹J. N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Rev. xiv, 6-12," RH 6:24 (March 6, 1855):185-187.

²This doctrine was considered by early SDAs to be an error which lay at the root of all corrupt doctrines. Ellen G. White referred to it as the "first lie" told by Satan to man in Eden, from which man was led to believe all other false doctrines. See Early Writings (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1882), pp. 218-222. She called it the "foundation of spiritualism" that "turned thousands to universalism, infidelity, and atheism." Testimonies for the Church (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948), 1:342-345 [1862]. Cf. Ellen G. White, "The Power of Satan," RH 19:24 (May 13, 1862):186-187. J. N. Andrews referred to this doctrine as "the cornerstone" of heathenism, Romanism, spiritualism, and modern orthodoxy" ("Brief Thoughts Concerning Life and Death," RH 34:13 [September 21, 1869]:100-101); James White told of its wide-spread "desolating influence" during the Millerite movement (Life Incidents [Battle Creek: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Assn., 1868], p. 154); and D. P. Hall wrote a book on the subject which he entitled Man Not Immortal, the

of the trinity,¹ sprinkling as baptism,² Sunday for Sabbath,³ the millennium

Only Shield against the Seductions of Modern Spiritualism (Rochester: Review and Herald Office, 1854). Canright later testified: "They [SDAs] say that a belief in this doctrine [soul-sleep] will save men from infidelity, spiritualism, Universalism, etc. . . . The Adventists assert that the doctrine of the conscious state of the dead leads to Spiritualism." Seventh-Day [sic] Adventism Renounced [1889] (Nashville: B. C. Goodpasture, 1948), p. 398. Canright had earlier claimed that belief in inherent immortality led to "the unscriptural and unreasonable doctrine of universal salvation." "The Scripture Doctrine of a Future Life—No. 1," ST 5:4 (January 16, 1879):19.

¹The doctrine of the Trinity met early opposition in SDA literature. Cf. James White's implied commendation of the early pioneer "Bro. Cottrell" for having rejected the doctrine ("Western Tour," RH 4:2 [June 9, 1853]:12). Waggoner called the doctrine "absurd" ("God Is," RH 8:2 [April 24, 1856]:13). Uriah Smith insisted that "the scripture . . . represents Christ as a created being" ("Christ Our Passover," RH 14:21 [October 13, 1859]:164). D. W. Hull ridiculed the doctrine ("Bible Doctrine of the Divinity of Christ," RH 14:26 [November 17, 1859]:201). J. H. Waggoner maintained that one cannot be a trinitarian and hold the vicarious atoning work of Christ ("What Think Ye of Christ?" RH 30:23 [November 19, 1867]:348-349). Uriah Smith said that Adventists believed "Christ was a divine being, not merely in his mission, but in his person also; that his sufferings were penal and his death vicarious," and therefore they were neither "unitarians nor trinitarians" ("To Correspondents," RH 52:1 [June 27, 1878]:4). W. H. Littlejohn asserted that while Christ is divine and should be worshiped, he was not co-eternal with God in the sense in which trinitarians taught it. He was not created but there was a time when he did not exist ("Christ Not A Created Being," RH 60:16 [April 17, 1883]:250). And by 1896 Smith was also maintaining that Christ was not a created being, yet he had a beginning ("In the Question Chair," RH 73:51 [December 22, 1896]:813). Cf. Leroy Edwin Froom, Movement of Destiny, (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1971), pp. 149-166, 289-312.

²Earlier J. N. Andrews had referred to sprinkling as a "Protestant" tradition ("Remarks of O. R. L. Crosier on the Institution, Design and Abolition of the Sabbath," RH 2:11 [February 3, 1852]:81). R. F. Cottrell, a converted Seventh Day Baptist (baptized around 1851), insisted that sprinkling was a "non-essential" because it was unbiblical ("A Letter to the Disciples of the Lord," RH 4:12 [September 27, 1853]:94). And M. E. Cornell assigned its origin to the Catholic Church which had "changed the ordinance of baptism, by substituting sprinkling" ("The Last Work of the True Church," RH 6:29 [May 15, 1855]:228), and saw the change as a prelude to the change of the Sabbath. Cf. Hiram Edson, "The Two Laws," RH 2:5 (October 7, 1851):39.

³The Sabbath, and its alleged change to Sunday, was the most common topic, especially in the first few years of Adventist publishing. It was common to connect it to the prophecies of Revelation. See for example, Hiram Edson, "The Commandments of God, and the Mark of the Beast Brought to View by the Third Angel of Rev. xiv, Considered in Connection

of peace,¹ a non-literal (or spiritualistic view) of the second coming of Christ, slavery ["the fugitive-slave bill"],² and the lowering of the standard of godliness.

The doctrine of unconditional election, often referred to simply as "Calvinism," came under a great deal of criticism. SDAs have been Arminian in their view of man's free will. Man is able to fall from grace and is morally responsible. Anything mitigating this view was considered unbiblical.³

While the early SDAs were opposed to setting up a creed, they had no problem setting up heresy lists which were a form of creeds.⁴ James

with the Angel of Chap. vii, Having the Seal of the Living God," RH 3:11 (September 30, 1852):81-84.

¹Cf. William C. Gage, "Popular Errors and Their Fruits," RH 26:14 (September 5, 1865):108.

²Andrews mentioned that this bill was "vindicated by our most distinguished doctors of divinity as a righteous measure" and decried the fact that these "doctors of divinity" justified the buying and selling of human beings on the basis of the golden rule. "The Three Angels," p. 186.

³Ibid. Cf. G. [sic], "The Immortality of the Soul," RH 26:26 (November 28, 1865):204; J. H. Waggoner, "The Doctrine of Election," RH 30:5 (July 16, 1867):73; and R. F. Cottrell, "Universalism," RH 55:11 (March 11, 1880):170.

⁴It is significant to this study that in the formative years of Adventist thought, the doctrine of original sin achieved no prominent place in these lists. The doctrine is mentioned in an anonymous article entitled, "The Romish Creed," RH 6:30 (May 29, 1855):235, but only as a corollary to the Catholic views on Limbo and not as a polemic directed at the doctrine itself. J. N. Loughborough later critiqued unscriptural practices of Rome, such as penance, confession to priests, and the question of human absolution ["Romish Dealing with Sins," RH 43:7 (January 30, 1874):33]. He mentions original sin in passing in a quotation of Kerwan: "Penance is a sacrament by which the sins committed after baptism are forgiven. Your doctrine is, that original sin is washed away in baptism, and that penance secures the forgiveness of all sins committed after baptism! Where is this distinction taught in the Bible?" But this reference is indirect and not the target of Loughborough's attack. In an anonymous list of twenty "popish errors," complete with the dates of adoption by the Church of Rome, original sin is not mentioned ("Origin of Popish Errors," ST 2:17 [March 30, 1876]:133). J. H. Waggoner took issue with those who taught that original sin demanded

White followed the same practice while recommending certain Adventist publications written to answer such heresies as spiritualism, universalism, infidelity, immortality of the soul, and an incorrect view of the Atonement.¹ Often these lists were tied to the Roman Catholic church,² and at other times simply referred to as "traditions of men."³

See the Papist preferring the Pope for the head of the Church, in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the fire of purgatory, in the stead of the blood of Christ, to cleanse his soul from sin. Witness the Protestant choosing sprinkling, in the place of burial with Christ as baptism; choosing death as 'the gate of endless joy,' in the place of the resurrection, the promised 'path of life,' and choosing a kingdom 'beyond the bounds of time and space,' instead of 'the kingdom and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven.' Witness also the mass of adventists [sic] rejecting and trampling under foot the fourth commandment, that they may in its place observe a tradition of the Elders! . . . But the law of God cuts up the tradition of the Elders by the roots, makes manifest the carnal mind wherever it exists, . . . and stirs every energy of that wicked principle in deadly opposition. Hence many are found in array against the fourth commandment, and not a few against the whole law of God. Some with the hope of sustaining their favorite tradition, others with no other object than to destroy the fourth commandment.⁴

It is apparent that early Adventists saw themselves in a corrective, even prophetic, role. James White wrote in 1853 that the professors of religion were "stained with the blood of poor sinners," because they had confused people with their doctrines.⁵ Such judgments were also part of the earlier [Millerite] movement which had insisted that its own interpre-

infant baptism [this is discussed below] in "Thoughts on Baptism," RH 51:12 (March 21, 1878):89-90.

¹"What Are You Doing?" RH 6:25 (March 20, 1855):196.

²Sarah Haselton, "Letter to Brother Smith," RH 8:11 (July 10, 1856):87.

³Castle Churchill, "Traditions of Men," RH 3:4 (December 16, 1858):30.

⁴Andrews, "Remarks of O. R. L. Crosier, Reviewed," p. 81.

⁵"Gospel Union," RH 4:22 (December 6, 1853):172.

tations of Scripture were the true and literal understanding of God's will and word.¹

Attacks on Creeds

From the beginning of their movement, Adventists insisted that the Bible was their only creed.² This was a version of the Protestant principle sola scriptura but was conditioned by the notion that credalization was at least a five-step development to Babylonish apostasy which progressed as follows: (1) the making of a creed, (2) the using of the creed to test fellowship, (3) the trying of members by the creed, (4) the denouncing as heretics of all who did not subscribe to the creed, and finally, (5) the persecuting of those heretics.³ The question was not meant to challenge the importance of a consistent belief system. This Adventists insisted upon:

All fundamental errors in doctrine, will lead to errors in practice. . . . If we believe wrong, we shall do wrong, . . . All errors in belief, leading us to act, will meet with disappointment. . . . We are accountable for our belief. Many have adopted the opinion that it matters but little what we believe.⁴

¹For example, see C. Fitch, "Extract of a Sermon by Bro. C. Fitch," RH 5:14 (April 25, 1854):107-108.

²James White, A Word to the Little Flock (Brunswick: James White, 1847):13: "The Bible is a perfect, and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice." Cf. James White, "The Gifts of the Gospel Church," RH 1:9 (April 21, 1851):70: "The Bible is an everlasting rock. It is our rule of faith and practice. . . . Every Christian is therefore in duty to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. He should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts."

³J. N. Loughborough, in Uriah Smith, "Doings of the Battle Creek Conference, Oct. 5 and 6, 1861," RH 18:19 (October 8, 1861):148-149.

⁴"Importance of a Correct System of Belief," RH 20:19 (October 7, 1862):150. Cf. A. Smith, "The Value of a 'Creed,'" RH 64:19 (May 10, 1887):298-299, and D. M. Canright, "Correct Doctrine Important," ST 4:40 (October 24, 1878):317.

Creeds were perceived as stifling to belief-development.¹ They reformed only in part,² and Christians in the progression of credalization, come to the place where they settle doctrinal differences with their creeds, and thus detract from Scripture and its truth.³ Hence human creeds lead to the darkening of man's view of God.

Human creeds stand unyieldingly against the progress of light and truth. They blind the consciences of many, and stifle the voice of truth; that, were it otherwise, would cheer the hearts of the faithful, and arouse the sinner to flee from coming wrath. Human creeds may have the credit of holding together vast bodies of men professing Christianity; but it must be acknowledged that within their brace are all the corruptions and damning sins of the age.⁴

There was on-going discussion throughout the formative years regarding the offensiveness and necessity of a creed;⁵ through extensive

¹Uriah Smith, "Don't Stagnate in Creeds," RH 54:18 (October 23, 1879):141.

²Uriah Smith, "The Reformation Not Yet Complete," ST 5:6 (February 6, 1879):45. Smith revealed three errors that have held back a completed Reformation: (1) Wrong principles of interpretation; (2) Efforts to bring the Bible to support predetermined beliefs; and (3) Reforming in part and, through credalization, barring any further development. He concluded that "if a church, before it becomes free from Romish errors, adopts a creed, these errors are stereotyped into its belief; and that this is the case with most Protestant churches, is the testimony of discerning men."

³R. F. Cottrell, "The Bible Explained by the Creed," RH 51:17 (April 25, 1878):133. Cf. D. M. Canright, "Authority of the Fathers," RH 45:23 (June 3, 1878):181.

⁴James White, "Gospel Order," RH 5:10 (March 28, 1854):76-77.

⁵See "General Conference Proceedings: Twenty-Second Annual Session," RH 60:46 (November 20, 1883):732-733; R. F. Cottrell, "The Creed of Opposition," RH 61:36 (September 2, 1884):563-564. Discussion on the adoption of a church manual was introduced in the RH of June 5, 1883, but terminated after the negative vote of the 1883 General Conference session. Writing of this, G. I. Butler, president of the General Conference, commented, "The Bible contains our creed and discipline. It thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good works. What it has not revealed relative to church organization and management, the duties of officers and ministers, and kindred subjects, should not be strictly defined and drawn out into minute specifications for the sake of uniformity, but rather be left to the individual judgment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." "No Church Manual," RH 60:47 (November 27, 1883):745-746.

detailing is outside the scope of this study, it is relevant to observe that this anti-creed orientation was bound to affect doctrine as it developed in the belief structure of the church. Church elders remained firm on their Bible-only position with regard to doctrine, practice, and church order.¹ Scripture was to be the final appeals court.

We want no human creed; the Bible is sufficient. The divine order of the New Testament is sufficient to organize the church of Christ. If more were needed, it would have been given by inspiration. But with only that which was 'given by inspiration of God,' the man of God is 'thoroughly' [sic] furnished unto all good works. . . . The Advent people professed to take the Bible as their guide in doctrine and in duty. If they had followed their guide strictly, and had carried out the gospel principles of order and discipline, much confusion would have been saved. Many in their zeal to come out of Babylon, partook of a rash, disorderly spirit, and were soon found in a perfect Babel of confusion.²

Creeds did not carry the credibility of "inspiration"³ and were therefore not sufficient basis on which to preserve the peculiarity of God's people, whether it be the basis of fellowship or disfellowship.⁴

The practical value of this discussion was seen in the Adventist theological epistemology. It was considered misguided to discuss theology outside of Biblical language. Since the Bible was the creed, all argumentation

¹James White, "Gospel Order," RH 4:22-23 (December 6, 13, 1853):173, 180. Cf. James White, "Reply to the Resolution of the Seventh-day [sic] Baptist Central Association," RH 4:7 (August 11, 1853):52-53.

²James White, "Gospel Order," p. 173.

³Ibid., p. 180. Uriah Smith, "An Appeal to Men of Reason and Common Sense," RH 13:19 (March 31, 1859):146-147.

⁴J. B. Frisbie, "Church Order," RH 6:20 (January 9, 1855):153-155. See also Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 15:3 (December 8, 1859):24: "We believe the Bible to be the only creed, and that the only legitimate bond there is to hold the church together is the power of truth and love. In regard to dealing with members, we do not think the Scriptures represent it in the light of cutting off or casting out. But when a person is guilty of disorderly walk, the directions we have are to withdraw ourselves from him, and have 'no company with him, that he may be ashamed.'" Cf. James White, "Gospel Order," p. 173.

should begin and end there. R. F. Cottrell argued that if a doctrine is truly Biblical, one should have no trouble using Biblical language. In applying this principle, he chided Elder N. V. Hull (a Seventh Day Baptist with whom he had several weeks of debate in the pages of the Review and Herald) that Hull could not frame his argument without using "philosophical language." "A doctrine that cannot be expressed in Bible language, is not a Bible doctrine."¹ Sixteen years later, in a more constructive article, he wrote:

The doctrines of the Scripture are best expressed in Scripture language; and a doctrine that necessitates the use of other terms, is not to be accepted as a Bible doctrine. Such terms as trinity, transubstantiation, indulgence, penance, and purgatory, are not necessary to express any Bible doctrine. We can believe all that the Scriptures say of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and yet not believe the strange contradictory ideas which men wish to convey by the term triune God.²

Creeds were the mothers of both tradition and confusion since they complicated matters with obscure technical terms that mean different things to different people. The early SDA view was that one should be concerned about commonly accepted, clear Biblical topics, that one should take a literal approach to Scripture, and that one should let the Bible explain itself.³ With such an approach to truth, creeds became unnecessary to the SDA way of thinking.⁴

¹N. V. Hull and R. F. Cottrell, "Nature and Destiny of Man," RH 24:16 (September 13, 1864):121-123.

²R. F. Cottrell, "Bible Terms for Bible Doctrines," RH 55:17 (April 22, 1880):266. In this article Cottrell proceeds to disagree with the doctrine of annihilation, not because the Bible does not teach the doctrine or because Cottrell himself does not believe it, but because Scripture never uses the actual term and therefore the term itself can leave wrong implications in readers' minds.

³James White, Spiritual Gifts (Battle Creek: SDA Publishing Association, 1864):29-30. Cf. James White, "Preach the Word," RH 16:3 (June 5, 1860):17-19.

⁴D. T. Bordeau, "Seventh-day Adventists Have No Creed," RH 43:10 (February 17, 1874):77.

Adventists essentially took the same radical position with regard to the "gifts." While the spiritual gift of prophecy was seen as "of the spirit," it was emphatically maintained that these gifts were not to be the basis for doctrine nor were they to be "quoted for that purpose."¹

Andrews insisted that age does not determine the soundness of purported truth either, and that all false doctrines can be traced to their source and must be tested by Scripture. As to how to decide on the veracity or falseness of doctrines, he asserted, "if they agree with the word of God, they are truth; if they do not agree with its teachings, they are worthless fables."² Andrews did not give insight into the problem of subjective interpretation of Scripture, but his lack of concern seems to have stemmed from the presupposition that a good debate in a consistent Scriptural context would render valid conclusions acceptable to all honest truth seekers.³

¹Uriah Smith, "Doubts and Queries," RH 31:7 (July 30, 1867):104: "In regard to doctrines, we would repeat that whatever theory enters our system of belief, we prove by the Bible and the Bible alone. The visions are not given for the purpose of establishing a rule of faith, and are not designed to be quoted for that purpose." Cf. James White, "A Test," RH 7:8 (October 16, 1855):61-62. James White wrote in 1861: "The Bible is our creed. We take the Bible and the gifts of the Spirit; embracing the faith that thus the Lord will teach us from time to time." Uriah Smith, "Doings of the Battle Creek Conference, October 5 and 6, 1861, p. 148.

²J. N. Andrews, "Tradition," RH 6:9 (October 10, 1854):69.

³In spite of this discussion about credalization, five doctrines that had passed the Scriptural test were listed on the new masthead of the Review and Herald, beginning August 15, 1854, as "leading doctrines" to which the editorial staff of the journal adhered. See RH 6:1 (August 15, 1854):1: "Leading Doctrines Taught by the Review. The Bible, and the Bible alone, the rule of faith and duty. The Law of God, as taught in the Old and New Testaments, unchangeable. The Personal Advent of Christ and the Resurrection of the Just, before the Millennium. The Earth restored to its Eden perfection and glory, the final inheritance of the Saints. Immortality alone through Christ, to be given to the Saints of the Resurrection." Before the formative years ended, SDAs produced, under Smith's leadership, a statement of "Fundamental Principles" (see ST 1:1 [June 4, 1874]:3). Prior to this, at a conference in Battle Creek in 1861,

Mild Sarcasms

That popular spirit which tended to hold formal training in theology suspect can be seen in the early Adventist publications. It occasionally took the form of mildly sarcastic comments about professional theologians, ministers, and scholars of other Christian persuasions. These men were referred to (somewhat scornfully) as "the learned," "the worldly-minded," or the "faithless professors of religion"¹ when they were at variance with what Adventists held to be truth.² They were called "the esteemed" (usually with dubious respect intended)³ or "Doctors of Divinity" (not always as a

James White had expressed the conviction that a "covenant" might be permissible rather than a creed, a term he undoubtedly brought with him from the Christian Connection. James White's position on Scripture was identical to that of the Christian Connection, an offshoot movement of Methodism and the church out of which White came to join the Millerite movement. See James White, Life Incidents, p. 15. See also J. Pressley Barrett, ed., The Centennial of Religious Journalism (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Assn., 1908), pp. 17-29, 129-130, 314, 522, for Christian Connection position on creeds. This was also the position of William Miller, White's mentor in Adventism. Life Incidents, pp. 27-39. White's attempt is noteworthy in that it demonstrated the pioneers' recognition of the importance of essential agreement on major areas as well as a conscious attempt to avert established weaknesses of credalization.

¹R. F. Cottrell, "Simplicity of Bible Truth," RH 3:26 (May 13, 1853):203.

²It was also common practice to use the scholars to strengthen the credibility of an Adventist argument, much as Augustine did in his establishment of his doctrine of original sin. A very typical example of this is found in the unsigned article, "Much in Little," ST 4:2 (January 10, 1878):11, where the author gives a series of quotations from such theologians as Jeremy Taylor, Jonathan Edwards, Edward Beecher, Isaac Watts, Adam Clarke, etc. Here theologians lent credence to the Adventist view on the nature of man, by virtue of their authority, and were used as "reputable authors." Cf. G. W. Amadon, "Psalm cxix, 60," RH 19:3 (December 17, 1861):24.

³Phil. Alarm, "Faith," RH 5:12 (April 11, 1854):91. Of constant irritation to the early Adventists was the fact that their doctrine of the imminent return of Christ was spurned by this class of scholars. See Phil. Alarm, "Priests and Rulers," RH 4:11 (September 20, 1853):88, where, in a short article, the author compares the present scholars to Christ's most bitter opponents, i.e., the priests and rulers of the Jews.

compliment to their scholarship),¹ and sometimes they were ridiculed for their sensitivity to detail and precision of expression.²

Such forthrightness was not a characteristic unique to Adventism but should be recognized as a part of the times. This approach helped to neutralize the opponent as well as to emphasize the point. It accompanied the debate approach, which was also popular for a time among the early Adventists. But it probably must be admitted that this critical approach would either have an influence on or stem from one's epistemological orientation. And the early Adventists often expressed open skepticism regarding the world of the theological classroom in general—those professional theologians whose tasks, they considered, had produced "Babylon." Thus J. N. Loughborough could remark disparagingly about "a proud and populous Church, with their College-learned ministry."³ And J. N. Andrews could play on the term "Doctor of Divinity," by asserting that the "divinity of the Scriptures has never been sick, and never needed doctors;

¹A. S. Hutchins, "Proved by Butler's Catechism," *RH* 6:1 (August 15, 1854):5: "We would be saved from all hasty and uncharitable conclusions; but, it is greatly to be feared that catechisms, creeds, and the inferences of Doctors of Divinity, are held in such an estimate by many of the professedly pious, that the plain, simple teachings of the sacred scriptures are overlooked, and the commandments of God made void through tradition."

²Uriah Smith, "An Appeal to Men of Reason," p. 146.

³"Is the Soul Immortal?" *RH* 7:5 (September 4, 1855):34. Note the irony of Loughborough's remarks: "How shall we arrive at just conceptions of that word [Scripture] and its true interpretation? Oh, says one of the proud professors of our day, you go to Rev. Mr. A., Doctor of Divinity, he will enlighten your mind in regard to the matter. The second says, A will not inform you aright; you must go to one of our Divines, and so all direct our attention in a different direction for an understanding of the word. They disagree among themselves, and thus are produced upward of 600 different sentiments of the present time. . . . If the position be true that the student of the Bible must first have a thorough knowledge of theology taught in the College, before he can understand that book, then it would seem to the inquiring mind that the Bible, after all, was not the revelation of God's will, as it does not convey the idea of the author, but his meaning is to be found by the learning of the schools."

but human divinity . . . has found the services of this class of men indispensable."¹

Such were the presuppositions of the early Adventists as they approached their task of fashioning a church out of the faithful of the old Millerite movement. These notions would inevitably affect their perception of truth. The fact is that the pioneers were not unaffected by others' interpretations of Scripture. Those who affected their thinking were theologians in their own right, even if more practical, and in some cases more popular or pastoral, than the schoolmen whom they did not admire. It would not be overstating the case to suggest that the classroom against which they tended to fight was one that many in the contemporaneous classroom were also fighting--the Old Calvinism of early New England. And while it is true that SDAs fought their unique battles (such as the Sabbath and the sanctuary), when it came to a contemporary correction of the doctrine of original sin, many of the elements were residual presuppositions hammered out through the New England debate.

From New England Debate to Adventism

Up to here this investigation has dealt exclusively with a study of the historical development of hamartiological doctrine as it relates to Adam and his posterity. It is the purpose here to show the connection of the New England milieu to the development of early Adventist thought. Interestingly, as is seen shortly, the concerns of SDAs were more anthropological than hamartiological.

¹J. N. Andrews, "Learned Folly," RH 5:24 (July 18, 1854):188. Andrews does seem to leave the door open to learning provided that the scholar is devoted to bringing the task into harmony with Scripture. But "the labor of their whole lives seem to be spent in making scriptural divinity conform to that of their several religious bodies. Hence some of the plainest truths in the Word of God are reduced to nothing, and things not mentioned

The anthropological issue of man's immortality/mortality has been present in this study out of necessity, but has not been the central issue. The earliest Christians tended to make immortality a condition rooted in man's probation.¹ For later Christians, particularly from Tertullian onward, the basic immortal nature of man was assumed, so that original sin came to involve the discussion of creationism (souls created), and traducianism (souls propagated naturally). This presupposition created an eschatological problem which was solved by the notion of eternal miseries for the lost.² And while there have ever been conditionalists in the line of historic Christian thought, modern times in America brought the Calvinistic clash with the Enlightenment (that was being imported from England) and a renewed interest in conditionalism.³

John Locke and John Taylor were both conditionalists.⁴ No doubt they believed that their conclusions regarding man's conditional immortality and their views of the effect of Adam's sin went hand in hand. At any rate, the development of conditionalism in America saw these concepts reunited as they had been in the early days. In a real sense conditionalism

by God in his word, are made to become truths of the first importance."

¹See Froom, Conditionalist Faith, 1:757-977.

²See *ibid.*, pp. 758-759, for chart of early believers.

³In Adventism the non-immortality of the wicked became an "old landmark." See Ellen White's comments in Manuscript 13, 1889, in Ellen G. White, Counsels to Writers and Editors (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1946), pp. 30-31.

⁴In an effort to cite commonality of belief, SDAs often listed theologians who had held the same views as they were emphasizing. Locke and Taylor are both cited as supporting the conditionalist view of man. See John Milton, "The State of the Dead," reprinted in ST 3:42 (November 1, 1877):330-331. This list also includes John Milton, James Stephens, Archbishop Wakely, Bishop Law, Edward White, William G. Menerhoff, and H. H. Dobney. Canright printed a similar list but did not include Taylor (Canright, "The Immortality of the Soul," pp. 169, 177): The Socinians,

and New Haven views of man's responsibility coalesced in Adventist theology. And it is clear that the Adventist view of Adam's sin was an element of a larger anthropology that became part of the church's faith.

Henry Grew and George Storrs

Theological individualism led many to withdraw from their churches during the Second Great Awakening period. Two such persons were Henry Grew (1781-1862), pastor of the First Baptist Church of Hartford, Connecticut, from 1807-1811,¹ and George Storrs (1796-1867), a Methodist minister who left his church in 1840 over this very question of natural immortality.² Both men were to have a powerful impact on the Millerite movement and the subsequent development of Seventh-day Adventist theology.

Henry Grew

Grew came to accept the theory of the conditional immortality of man, left his Baptist pastorate, and wrote two tracts on the subject of man's nature and destiny entitled The Intermediate State (c.1835) and Future Punishment, Not Eternal Life in Misery (1844).³ Storrs read Grew's first tract and three years later relinquished his pulpit upon finally accepting Grew's argument as what he perceived to be the Scriptural view on the subject.⁴ Later he published his own views and, after accepting a new pastorate in New York, preached a series of sermons which were subsequently

and personalities such as John Locke, John Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Archbishop Tillotson, Frederick W. Stosch, Henry Layton, John Pitts, Henry Dodwell, Isaac Watts, Bishop Law, and more.

¹Froom, Conditionalist Faith, 2:300.

²Ibid., p. 306.

³Ibid., p. 301. For a bibliography of these works see the Ph.D. dissertation by Cosmas Rubencamp, Immortality and Seventh-day Adventist Eschatology (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1969), p. 113.

⁴Ibid.

published in book form and entitled An Enquiry: Are the Souls of the Wicked Immortal? In Six Sermons (1842).¹

George Storrs

Storrs is the central figure in the earliest Adventist treatment of Adam's sin. As a participant in the prophetic preaching of the Adventist Awakening,² he also became a significant contributor to the movement's view of man's nature. James White wrote that Storrs' Six Sermons were widely circulated among Adventists and adopted by many.³ Loughborough recorded that "thousands of Adventists" accepted Storrs' views of the nature of man.⁴ And Froom has recognized him as the man "who introduced the teaching of Conditionalism into the Second Advent Movement of the time."⁵

Storrs demonstrated the facets of Adventist epistemology listed above and became a model for the Adventist arguments as well. He serves as a typical example of the contemporary, popular predisposition against Calvinistic fatalism. This predisposition, far from originating in Adventism, was learned at his mother's knee, presumably as a common attempt to counteract those extremes.⁶

¹Froom, Conditionalist Faith, 2:307.

²See Leroy Edwin Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, 4 vols. (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1954), 4:804-809.

³Life Incidents, p. 154.

⁴J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1905), pp. 125, 179.

⁵Froom, Conditionalist Faith, 2:308. Cf. A. W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists, 4 vols. (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1961), 1:147, where the author suggests that this doctrine is a safeguard against the spiritualism of the day. Cf. Rubencamp, Immortality and SDA Eschatology, pp. 114ff.

⁶George Storrs, Six Sermons on the Inquiry: Is There Immortality

Storrs held that truth is progressive and continually unfolding. While he respected the Reformers for pushing back the frontiers of understanding, he insisted that they were not to be considered the last word for present thought. Where they may serve as models is in their attempt to discover truth in Scripture, not necessarily in the contexts of their discovery which they considered to be "truth". In the light of their prejudices they did well, but God expects Christians to take their own Bibles and search out "things 'new,' as well as 'old.'"¹

In addition, Storrs insisted that Biblical language was superior to theological and philosophical terminology and that it was even necessary to a meaningful expression of truth. In his discussion of "spiritual death," for example, he took the position that rather than using this expression which was unscriptural and open to confusion, one should use the very adequate Biblical descriptions such as unholiness, sensuality, carnal mindedness, earthliness, devilishness, lovers of self, proud, lovers of the world, hateful.²

There is an anti-credalist bias in Storrs' book which reflects the liberal trends of New England. Immortality of the soul is seen as a doctrine

in Sin and Suffering? 2nd ed. (New York: Bible Examiner, 1855), pp. 6, 20. Storrs' life sketch includes this observation: "The strong tendency to fatalism, in the Calvinistic preaching of that period, was a subject which the mother of these children did not fail to endeavor to counteract in the minds of her offspring, and to impress upon them unceasingly, that if they would seek the Lord he would be found of them. Such pious labor was not lost [on the children in Storrs' home]." Ibid., p. 6. Storrs' Adventist epistemology is clearly outlined in the first sermon: "It is a solemn duty to study our Bibles, and form our opinions of what they teach for ourselves, as we must answer for ourselves. . . . The language of the Bible, then should be explained as the language of any other book, i.e., according to its plain and obvious meaning: unless there is a clear necessity for departing from it." Ibid., pp. 20-21. Compare Ellen White's position on this which reflects the mature SDA view of 1911: "The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed." Great Controversy, p. 599.

¹Six Sermons, p. 122.

²Ibid., p. 110. Cf. pp. 11, 65, 87, 89ff., 113, 117, 119, 131.

of heathen philosophers—one which has driven many to infidelity. Teachers can help believers grow in their faith, but they overstep their bounds when they try to decide who are heretics and who are orthodox. Creeds are not to fill such a position. Ministers, says Storrs, are to show people their sins and bring them to Christ for healing. But because churches have used creeds wrongly they have been led into error and the acceptance of fables such as the doctrine in question. Instead one needs to recognize that there is truth in all denominations and that only a closed sectarianism claims exclusiveness here. Early education, taught by creed-bound parents, makes doctrines such as inherent immortality and eternal punishment acceptable to children. Children are so thoroughly inculcated that it is practically impossible for them to think outside of that prejudice.¹ Storrs' answer is an appeal to the Bible and common sense justice.²

Storrs' Treatment of Adam and the Effects of His Fall

Storrs' position on Adam's sin and its effects on his posterity must be understood in the setting of his entire anthropology. In Sermon I, Storrs sets up his general epistemology and some of his Biblical hermeneutic. He insists that natural immortality is a doctrine of the heathen philosophers and is generally based on non-Scriptural foundations. Man is whole and death is the extinction of life. In this sermon Storrs introduces the argument

¹Ibid., pp. 20, 45-46, 66, 88, 105, 109, 118, 118-122, 125, 150.

²This emphasis on Scripture and common sense, or logical forms of human reason, present in both New England and the Adventist writers, pervades the writing of Storrs (see *ibid.*, pp. 58-61, 82, 112). The same concerns mentioned above in regard to the preservation of God's honor (see above, pp. 210-212) are present throughout Storrs' book (see *ibid.*, pp. 80, 105-106, 112, 143, 150). Storrs left the Adventist movement in 1854 but his mark had been made, and as late as 1869 J. H. Waggoner wrote, "We know that we have no prejudice against Eld. Storrs—nothing but feelings of kindness and respect." J. H. Waggoner, "George Storrs vs. Non-Resurrectionism," *RH* 33:26 (June 22, 1869):205.

that was to become a major position throughout his book, namely, that the punishment God threatens must be the punishment God delivers.¹

In Sermon II, Storrs reiterates the meaning of death as total deprivation of life. "Perish" cannot mean to live in eternal sin and misery because of the way the word is used in Scripture. The tree of life was the conditional factor in man's immortality. If it stood for life then man's deprivation of it defines death.² There is a clear distinction between punishment and consequences. For example, if a murderer is put on death row he suffers pain, but that pain is only a consequence of his crime, it is not the penalty for it. Likewise, pain constitutes only a consequence of sin. The Biblical position with regard to sin's penalty is death not pain. And just as the murderer has not paid his penalty until he dies for his crime, so the sinner has not suffered the wages of sin until he dies. A person in hell-fire, eternally alive and in misery, would never pay the penalty for sin.³

Sermons III and IV develop the argument of inflicting the penalty as opposed to the penalty inflicted—ever an attempt at satisfying God's justice but its never being satisfied. The fact is that the eternal misery argument is indefinite and against common sense. When one speaks of figurative death (or spiritual death) what definite idea is formed? Tell a man he is dying, Storrs said, and "of that he can form some idea." In actuality then, man is in a dying state now. He is suffering from a "fatal disease," and the end will be "the entire dissolution of the man." Man will

¹Six Sermons, pp. 20ff., 38, 41, 44.

²Ibid., pp. 46, 48.

³Ibid., pp. 58-61.

cease to be unless order is restored. Here is where Christ enters the picture on man's behalf.¹

Storrs' strongest polemic against the old "orthodox" views begins in Sermon V. To see the penalty of sin as "spiritual death" is to usher in confusion—"no such phraseology is found in the Bible."² Death is the penalty threatened the wicked, but it is a death that puts an end to their being—it is not a "spiritual" death. Biblical terms are definite enough without introducing new and confusing terms such as this. Undoubtedly all understood spiritual death to mean sensuality, unholiness, carnality, etc., but is that the death that was threatened Adam? Storrs thinks not.

Some have insisted, Storrs argues, that since Adam did not physically die on "that day" that he sinned, the death threatened must be spiritual, but such a suggestion is based in a misunderstanding of the threat. The penalty was "dying thou shalt die," again a physical, degenerating process. In other words, the very day that Adam and Eve partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they were deprived of the tree of life and hence their whole being began to die.³

To maintain that the death threatened was spiritual death, it appears to me, is to confound man's sin with his punishment; if by spiritual death is meant, man became insensible to his obligation to his Maker, and to his condition as a sinner, and lost all disposition to obey God; and that, I suppose, is what is meant by it.⁴

Should one concede that insensibility to God is the penalty for Adam's sin passed on to his posterity, then man would be removed of all responsibility for sin, for in thus demonstrating his insensibility he would

¹Ibid., pp. 80, 82-84.

²Ibid., p. 110.

³Ibid., p. 111.

⁴Ibid., p. 112.

merely be carrying out the divinely ordained and irreversible punishment of God. But, on the contrary, insensibility to God is man's "most horrid sin," not his penalty.¹ Death as a penalty is always physical in Scripture.² The threat of God that Adam would surely die was God's way of emphasizing the certainty of his punishment as a physical actuality.

In Sermon VI Storrs finally gets to the problem from the standpoint of Adam's involvement. He begins by repeating his polemic against those who confound the literal meaning of Scripture by introducing "heathen" and "mystifying" notions.³ Specifically he has in mind those who spiritualize the idea conveyed by the word "perish." The assertion that the death Adam incurred on the world was literal is strengthened by the analogy between Adam and Christ in Rom 15:12-21. This comparison could not be preserved in its original intent if death and life were viewed as anything other than strictly literal.⁵

Storrs disagrees with the "current theology" regarding the original state of Adam, which held that the first man was an "intellectual and moral giant."⁶ He is referring here to the Westminster Confession⁷ which had taken the position that

After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image,

¹Ibid., pp. 112-113.

²Ibid., p. 113.

³Ibid., pp. 131-133.

⁴Ibid., p. 133.

⁵Ibid., p. 136.

⁶Ibid., p. 140.

⁷Ibid., p. 150.

having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.¹

By this sin [original sin] they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.²

Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.³

By an analogy with God's created works, Storrs argues that all things gradually develop. Intellect and character also gradually develop.⁴ In fact the original Adam was notoriously ignorant. For example, he did not even know he was naked, nor did he know good from evil.⁵ Both of these facts demonstrate his imperfection insofar as mature, intellectual development is concerned, and if the second Adam (Christ) had to develop in wisdom (Luke 2:40, 52), surely the first Adam did also.⁶

Adam is then considered from the moral aspect—was he really created holy, or with original righteousness? Again current theology has assumed extravagant notions—that holiness "pervaded his entire being, regulating all his faculties, members, and sense" and that Adam was a perfect moral giant.⁷ However, Storrs contends that Biblical facts indicate

¹Westminster Confession 4.2 (Leith, 199). Emphasis supplied.

²Ibid., 6.2 (Leith, 201). Emphasis supplied.

³Ibid., 6.6 (Leith, 202). Emphasis supplied.

⁴Storrs, Six Sermons, p. 141.

⁵Ibid., pp. 141-142.

⁶Ibid., p. 142.

⁷Ibid., p. 143. Cf. Westminster Confession, 4.2.

nothing of the kind, rather, that Adam was so immature that he did not withstand the mildest of temptations.¹

Here Storrs has entered the crux of his argument with regard to the original condition of Adam. (1) Adam had no moral character when he was created, rather "he was neither holy nor unholy," because character is the result of passing a probationary test.² Holiness is "a relative quality" which "presupposes action toward some other being, preceded by knowledge and understanding, based on choice." Orthodox theology about Adam's "holiness" is "patchwork." (2) In Adam we have a very good animal—"designed to be king" and "capable of developing a moral nature."³ (3) Furthermore, Adam did not have an immortal soul, that error of belief that "lies at the root of all other corruptions of the Scriptures."⁴ Finally, (4) Man was an animal "with an aptitude to attain knowledge superior to any other animal; and herein was to consist the 'image of God' in which he was created."⁵

For Storrs the argument effectively destroys: (1) the notion that man lost spiritual life at the Fall; and (2) the idea that man has inherent immortality. Since man was not created with "original righteousness" he could not lose it—hence the only alternative to a "spiritual" death is to see the death promised Adam and his posterity as simply "literal." When God tells man he will "die," he means, literally, man will cease to be.⁶ Adam failed, but in so doing he did not ruin his descendants' moral nature,

¹Storrs, Six Sermons, p. 143.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 144. Emphasis supplied.

⁴Ibid. Cf. Westminster Confession 6.2.

⁵Storrs, Six Sermons, p. 145.

⁶Ibid., pp. 148-149.

he simply brought death to them. The concept is adequately understandable with the aid of the contextual meaning: "dying to die."¹ The "sorrow, labor, and death" which came as a result of Adam's sin was a demonstration of God's mercy, not his wrath,² in that it was discipline, not a curse. The blessing of God should be recognizable in the fact that upon Adam's sinning God clothed man and then guarded him from the curse of theoretically immortal sin by removing him from the tree of life.³

Storrs takes a rigid view against original sin as depravity. Referring to the Westminster theology he opines:

The most blasphemous part of all is, that the God of Truth and Love is represented as causing Adam's posterity to inherit a morally depraved nature, "whereby they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and that continually:"—Assembly's Catechism. When will such reproach of God our Maker have an end?⁴

For Storrs, such a theological view was a "mere outburst of a distempered imagination."⁵ Man had no moral life before he sinned, he simply had animal life and the death to which he became subjected was therefore simply animal death.⁶ The doctrine of moral depravity is interpreted by Storrs as the door to the theological doctrine of natural immortality and a practical self-justification for enslaving sin.⁷ In Storrs, conditionalism and the view of sin popularized by the New Haven theologians (e.g., Nathaniel

¹Ibid., p. 149.

²Ibid. Again the Westminster Confession is countered. See 6.6 (Leith, 202): "the wrath of God, and the curse of the law."

³Storrs, Six Sermons, p. 149.

⁴Ibid., p. 150.

⁵Ibid., p. 149.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 150.

Taylor) are organically related. Adam lost access to the tree of life and therefore he died. It was by this that he entangled the whole human race in "corruption," i.e. (physical) dying and (literal) death.

Storrs' view also simplifies the issue relative to babies who die and purports to eliminate those "long and labored arguments" about the depravity of children.

Adam lost all claim to immortality—and therefore could not communicate it to his posterity, any more than an impoverished parent could communicate riches to his children; the consequence is, all his posterity are born, not liable to eternal sin and suffering, but liable to perish, to lose all life, sense and being; and what they need, previous to personal sins is simply salvation from perishing, or they need immortality, eternal life. Christ came to redeem man from death, or that loss of being to which he was exposed, and open eternal life to all; or, he "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light."¹

The "evil" or "corruptible" nature is the dying nature inherited from Adam. The natural tendency for all of Adam's posterity is a ceasing to be. When a person is born into this world as an offspring of Adam, he is destitute of immortality, he will perish, he will cease to be. But God has offered salvation in Christ who came to destroy the enemy: death. Herein lies the real meaning of John 3:16, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish."²

In short, Storrs' view consists of five main points:

1. Man is to be viewed as a wholistic unit, indivisible. Whatever affects any aspect of man affects all of man, i.e., he does not have a soul, he is a soul.

2. In his original creation man was made neutral both in his character and his essential constitutive nature. He was neither holy nor unholy, mortal nor immortal. Character (holiness) is the result of choices

¹Ibid., p. 151.

²Ibid., p. 152.

in relation to God's will. Mortality is the result of Adam's disobedience. By the same token immortality would have been the result of obedience and access to the tree of life—that life-giving source in Eden.

3. The nature of the penalty for original, or Adamic sin, is to be seen as literal, physical, temporal, or actual death—the opposite of life, i.e., the cessation of being. By no stretch of the Scriptural facts can death be spiritualized as depravity. God did not punish Adam by making him a sinner. That was Adam's own doing. All die because of Adam's sin irregardless of their moral character—children included.

4. The role of the Atonement of Christ is to give a second probation, as it were, to the victims of original sin. Consequently, every one can demonstrate his own faithfulness by obedience to God and eternal destiny is decided on the basis of personal sin, not Adamic sin.

5. Finally, the "corrupt" nature that all of Adam's posterity inherit from him is not to be perceived as depravity but as dying nature—"dying to die," or doomed to die—mortality. Original sin does not mean spiritual death for man, rather it means a dying condition or state of man.

The similarity of Storrs' views and arguments to those of John Taylor's was so striking that some apparently thought he had derived from Taylor. He replied, to this suggestion, that though he was aware that he was not the first to hold such notions, he had not seen Taylor's writings when he first espoused the view.¹

¹Storrs was referring primarily to the conditionalist views of Taylor, but the treatment of Adam was considered essential to these views. Storrs gave credit for his first impressions on the subject to the pamphlet by Henry Grew after which he claimed he made a thorough study of the Bible before reaching his final conclusions. "Another objection to the theory I advocate, and perhaps the one that stands most in the way of its being received for truth, is,—'If this doctrine is true, why has it never been found out before?' I do not know but it has been found out before. I lay no claim to being the discoverer of it. I am told that Samuel Bourne of Birmingham,

Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate the close similarities between Storrs and Taylor as well as the New Haven view typified in Nathaniel Taylor.

The charts in these figures demonstrate the variance between the conditionalist and New Haven anthropologies. But both groups were agreed on hamartiology in regard to (1) the nature of sin as voluntary, (2) no imputed sin or guilt, (3) propensities not properly called sin, (4) mediate imputation, (5) views on infant salvation, and (6) concern for God's vindication. It is evident from this that the New England debates over original sin were effective in adjusting traditional views.¹

However the connection between Taylor and Storrs is perceived, it is clear that (1) Storrs did not deny John Taylor's position but endorsed it in his book, and (2) by the time of Storrs, Taylor's position had reached the lower levels of popular theology and as such could have a direct influence on the pioneers of Adventism through George Storrs.

Whether Storrs reflected the standard Biblical epistemology of the Advent movement, or vice versa, the two were identical and Adventists accepted Storrs' view of sin and death in toto as a unitized structure of

and John Taylor of Norwich, held the same sentiments, 'in substance, making due allowance for the shape and color they had received from the peculiar mind of Mr. Storrs.' Whether that was true or not, I did not know at the time I first advocated the views here promulgated, as I had never seen their writings. My attention was called to the subject by a small pamphlet, in 1837. Who was its author, I did not know, as it had no name attached to it; but afterwards learned it was by Henry Grew, of Philadelphia. . . . I could not resist the impression to examine the subject for myself. . . . I studied the Bible, reading and noting down every text that spoke of, or appeared to have reference to the final destiny of wicked men. The results of my investigations and convictions I have laid before you." Storrs, Six Sermons, pp. 120-121.

¹Nathaniel Taylor's synthesis between new views of original sin and old views of human immortality appears to be a compromise with Calvinism. The conditionalist tradition seems to be claiming the organic necessity of the new anthropology to keep consistent with the new hamartiology; at least, the former will find the new hamartiology to be a logical outgrowth.

Figure 1

ANTHROPOLOGY		
<u>John Taylor</u>	<u>Nathaniel Taylor</u>	<u>George Storrs</u>
Death physical not spiritual	Death physical and spiritual	Death physical not spiritual
Man becomes dying being in Adam	Man becomes dying and depraved in Adam	Man becomes dying being in Adam
Death physical not misery	Death physical and misery	Death physical not misery
Expulsion from garden a blessing		Expulsion from garden a blessing
Pain is consequence not penalty	Pain is part of penalty	Pain is consequence not penalty
Romans 5:12-21 = mortal life	Romans 5:12-21 = mortal and depraved life	Romans 5:12-21 = mortal life
Lost life in Adam—Resurrection brings back (1 Cor. 15:22)		Lost life in Adam—Christ is the life-giver
Middle nature—not mortal or immortal, not moral or immoral		Middle nature—not mortal or immortal, not moral or immoral
Character is not created it is developed		Character is gradually developed Adam was not a moral giant

Figure 2

HAMARTIOLOGY		
<u>John Taylor</u>	<u>Nathaniel Taylor</u>	<u>George Storrs</u>
No imputed guilt	No imputed guilt	No imputed guilt
Sin cannot be inherited	Disposition toward sin but no inherited sin	No inherited moral depravity
Taint or propensity is not sin	Taint or propensity is not sin	Taint or propensity is not sin
Sin is voluntary by nature	Sin is voluntary by nature	Sin is voluntary by nature
Depravity is not created by God	Depravity is not created by God	Depravity is not created by God
Judicial Act—says man dies for Adam's sin		Certainty of death for Adam's sin
Person guilty when sins—mediate imputation	Person guilty when sins—mediate imputation	Person guilty when sins—mediate imputation
Infants not depraved	Infants are saved through Christ before accountability	Infants not depraved, saved through Christ before accountability
Believed view preserved goodness of God's character	Believed view preserved goodness of God's character	Believed view preserved goodness of God's character

truth. Owing to the primary anthropological stress in Adventism, the hamartiological and soteriological implications surfaced later in the new church's thought. For now it is sufficient to note how the view of Adam's sin, fitted into its larger anthropological schema, entered mainstream Adventist thought.

Early Systematizing of Adventist Thought

The arguments of Storrs first appeared in a systematized fashion in the pages of the Review and Herald in 1854 and 1855 through articles by J. M. Stephenson,¹ D. P. Hall, and J. N. Loughborough. Stephenson, an Adventist minister in Wisconsin, wrote a series entitled, "The Atonement,"² which was later published in book form by the same title and sold for several

¹Stephenson's experience in Seventh-day Adventism was short-lived (c.1852-1855) and soon after completing these articles he became an active antagonist of the RH editors and certain of the church's distinctive beliefs. He agitated among those of the so-called "Messenger party." News of Stephenson's variances first prepared in the pages of the RH in two articles by James White entitled "The Review 'Sectarian,'" RH 7:10, 21 (December 4, 1855, February 14, 1856):80, 160, referring to the charges made by Stephenson against the paper. Stephenson does not enjoy a good reputation in SDA historical literature. Froom credits him with the initial projection of Arianism into the church's primitive thought and strongly argues that he was not a prominent leader, hence not of "representative character." See Leroy Edwin Froom, Movement of Destiny (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1971), pp. 152-153. Stephenson is best known for his "Age-to-Come" views of the millennium. Both Froom and Loughborough mention that he divorced his wife, apparently because of his later antinomianism and personal lust, after which he was admitted to the insane asylum and died in the poor house. See Loughborough, Great Second Advent Movement, pp. 331-333. Cf. SDA Ency. s.v. "Messenger Party"; Ellen G. White, Testimonies 1:116-118, 122-123, 228-232, 311-323, 326-340, 714; and R. W. Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1979), pp. 92-93.

²J. M. Stephenson, "The Atonement," RH 6:2, 7-8, 10, 12-16 (August 22, September 26, October 3, 17, 31, November 7, 14, 21, December 5, 1854):9-11, 49-51, 57-60, 73-77, 89-91, 97-100, 105-107, 113-116, 121-124. James White announced the up-coming series in the Review and Herald (6:2 [August 22, 1854]:12) as of benefit "especially to the remnant of this time. . . . Our readers should carefully peruse each article when published."

years through the Review and Herald office.¹ D. P. Hall, the ministerial partner of Stephenson in the work in Wisconsin (and who subsequently left the church with him), wrote a series that appeared concurrently with Stephenson's on the subject of the non-immortality of the soul.² Hall's articles were also assembled into a book and sold for several years by the Review and Herald office.³ The following year Loughborough's long series appeared, also on the subject of non-immortality.⁴

¹J. M. Stephenson, The Atonement (Rochester, NY: Advent Review, 1854). James White wrote, "This work opens a wide field of Bible truth and will be found a valuable assistant in the study of the great theme on which it treats. We commend it to the notice of the friends of truth." James White, "New Works," RH 6:18 (December 19, 1854):144. This endorsement would later be retracted and Stephenson's work called "a failure." See James White, "New and Attractive Books," RH 31:22 (May 12, 1868):352.

²D. P. Hall, "The Mortality of Man: The Only Shield against the Seductions of Modern Spiritualism," RH 6:3-4 (August 29, September 5, 1854):17-19, 25-28. "Man Not Immortal: The Only Shield against the Seductions of Modern Spiritualism," RH 6:5-6, 17-19 (September 12, 19, December 12, 19, 26, 1854):33-36, 41-42, 129-132, 137-139, 145-147.

³James White, "New Works," p. 144: "We know of no subject better calculated to correct the errors of popular theology than the one embodied in this work. . . . What ought to thoroughly arouse the attention of all to this subject, is the use which Satan is making of the popular doctrine of natural immortality. The land is darkened with legions of evil spirits, purporting to be the immortal souls of our departed friends. They are now seeking to visit all classes of men for the purpose of destroying their faith in the teachings of the Bible, and with the avowed object of convincing men of the immortality of the soul. . . . Without the great truth that man is not immortal, and that the dead know not any thing, none are prepared to stand against wicked spirits in high places. We commend the work of Bro. Hall on the Immortality question as an able discussion of this great subject. Read it with candor, and arm yourself with the truth of God, to stand against the wiles of the Devil."

⁴J. N. Loughborough, "Is the Soul Immortal? An Examination of the Scripture Testimony Concerning Man's Present Condition and His Future Reward or Punishment," RH 7:5-13 (September 4, 18, October 2, 16, 30, December 4, 11, 18, 27, 1855):33-36, 41-43, 49-52, 57-60, 65-68, 73-75, 81-83, 89-91, 97-100.

J. M. Stephenson

In George Storrs one sees the treatment of Adam's sin primarily from the anthropological point of view. But in Stephenson the same basic treatment is given a soteriological emphasis or interpretation. By following his argument carefully it is possible to detect elements of concern held in common with conditionalism and New Haven thought. Because of the crucial nature of this point a more extensive treatment is done here on Stephenson than either Hall or Loughborough.

Stephenson begins his argumentation by distinguishing between (1) Adamic, or original transgression, and (2) individual, or personal transgression.² The penalty for each is simply literal death, and had it not been for Christ's mediatorial role, the distinction "first" and "second" deaths would never have been made. These distinctions refer simply to order and not to the nature of death. Christ interrupted the order of things by stepping in when man fell.

The penalty of God's law for original sin is death, (not a first death.) Mark the import of the language in which the first penalty is clothed! "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "As in Adam all die," &c. The penalty for personal sin is equally explicit. "The wages of sin is death." (Not a second death, but simply death.)³

Hence, the first and second deaths imply a gracious accommodation to Adam's Fall and testify to the fact of a mediator who gives man a second chance to live. But in understanding the penalty for Adam's sin one must first recognize the unconditional nature of God's threat.³

¹Stephenson, "The Atonement," p. 10.

²Ibid.

³Ibid. Stephenson argues that since man sinned, death had to occur. This was unconditional. Adam's posterity was involved in his sin because they too sinned, but their involvement was by proxy, or by their representative, not in actuality. Due to his Fall Adam became mortal and

The only exceptions to the Adamic penalty in salvation history are Enoch, Elijah, and those yet to be translated at the end of the age. However, these exceptions do not affect God's plan of salvation since the Atonement of Christ effectually deals only with the "second" death. Original sin demands that all die who are born in the physical line of Adam—righteous, wicked, infants—all. And all suffer this penalty "irrespective of their moral character" or spiritual standing in Christ. Yet because it was Adam who sinned personally, his posterity are not held personally accountable even though they now share his condition. Experientially it is personal sin that becomes the focal obstacle to man's salvation because herein lies the ground of man's accountability.¹

passed on to his children a "mortal, corruptible, dying nature," as Paul indicates in 1 Cor 15:22: "In Adam all die." "The apostle Paul places the question beyond the possibility of a doubt: he plainly teaches that Adam's sin involved his whole posterity in death. 'Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' Rom. v,12. Not that all have sinned 'after the similitude of Adam's transgression;' (verse 14) but by, or through Adam, as our representative, all have sinned. Adam sinned personally, whereas, his posterity sinned by proxy, or by their representative. Adam, being the representative of the entire human race, as a natural consequence, entails his own nature and destiny upon all his posterity. Having, therefore, incurred a mortal, corruptible, dying nature, he entails the same nature upon the generations proceeding from him. Of course he could give his children no better nature than that which he himself possessed." Ibid. The difficulty presented by this nature, i.e., dying, is removed at the resurrection of the dead. Ibid., p. 75.

¹Stephenson writes: "Both Testaments represent man as being exposed to death for personal sins. But, inasmuch as all die for original sin, none can die for personal sin, without a resurrection to a second life; hence the Bible teaches that there will be resurrection of the dead, 'both of the just and the unjust.' To be preceded by a second life, it must, in the nature of things, be a second death; hence while the penalty for personal sin is only one death, yet in reference to its relation to the penalty for original sin, it will be a second death. When I speak of this death as a second death, I wish to be distinctly understood as having no reference whatever to the nature of the penalty for personal sin, but only its relation to a previous death. This must be the only sense in which the Bible speaks of it as a second death." "The Atonement," p. 10.

No one dies for personal sins except those who are lost, but "all die the first death whether they sin or not." Therefore no one can avoid Adamic penalty by being converted, and every text of Scripture that holds out the hope of avoiding death must be interpreted as referring to the "second death" and as such relative to personal sin.¹

The penalty for personal sin is also unconditional—just as surely as death must be paid for Adamic sin, so it must be paid for personal sin. Herein lies the basis of God's justice in the Atonement.² Since infants have no personal sin they are automatically covered by the perfect Atonement of Christ, even though they must die for original sin.³

Having set the stage for God's activity by showing the obstacles man needs to have removed, Stephenson now turns to man's original nature. At creation, Adam was neither mortal nor immortal, but was susceptible of

¹Ibid.: "The penalty of the law of God for personal sins. It is death. Both Testaments represent man as being exposed to death for personal sins. But, inasmuch as all die for original sin, none can die for personal sin, without a resurrection to a second life; hence the Bible teaches that there will be a resurrection of the dead, 'both of the just and the unjust.' To be preceded by a second life, it must, in the nature of things, be a second death; hence while the penalty for personal sin is only one death, yet in reference to its relation to the penalty for original sin, it will be a second death. When I speak of this death as a second death, I wish to be distinctly understood as having no reference whatever to the nature of the penalty for personal sin but only its relation to a previous death. This must be the only sense in which the Bible speaks of it as a second death. . . . All die the first death whether they 'despise his [God's] ways or not. . . . All die the first death, whether they sin or not."

²Ibid., p. 11. Since death must be paid for personal sin, man is faced with two alternative solutions to the sin problem: (1) he must pay the penalty himself (if he is a personal sinner), or (2) he must find an acceptable substitute to pay that penalty for him. Hence, the role of Christ, the substitute, whose paying of the penalty is accepted by God in man's place.

³It should be noted that for Stephenson, the Atonement of Christ was not to deal with Adamic sin. His view did have an essentially forensic base. It was Anselmic in its insistence that God pays the ransom to his own honor or justice, and Stephenson describes its process in legal terms such as "representative," "substitute," etc. See *ibid.*, pp. 10, 11, 89.

either.¹ Since he disobeyed God he became a dying creature. Here the nature of the penalty must be considered. The Scriptures do not mean by "death," spiritual death, but rather a "dying condition" and, finally, a "dead condition."² To Stephenson, this is the correct interpretation of Rom 5:12-21. Where the first Adam failed and brought dying and death, the second Adam brings living and life.³

Stephenson next defines his concept of imputation. He maintains that Paul clearly asserted that "God had imputed Adam's sin to all his posterity,"⁴ but the only effect of this "imputation" is seen in that they all die. Had Christ not stepped in, man (Adam) would have died (ceased to

¹Ibid., p. 50: "He was an undeveloped being. His nature, as well as his character, was suspended upon his action towards law. Hence he was susceptible of either good or evil, mortality or immortality. Two trees were placed before him, and he was left free to choose between them. These trees represented two distinctive natures and destinies. To eat of one, he would become mortal and die; to eat of the other, he would become immortal and live forever. He did eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; consequently incurred a mortal, corruptible, dying nature."

²Stephenson illustrates: for 930 years Adam was dying, but after 930 years Adam was dead (ibid., p. 51). The nature of this condition was a return to the dust from which man was originally made. The fallen nature is the dying nature (ibid., p. 59). Christ's atonement is performed to move the "crown of immortality" from the head of Adam and place it on the head of the Saviour (the second Adam).

³Ibid. "His [Adam's] posterity must as a necessary consequence inherit the nature and condition of their father. Adam, as a matter of course, could give his offspring no better nature and condition than he himself possessed. Having incurred a mortal, dying, nature, he entailed the same nature upon his posterity. Hence according to the testimony of Paul, all die by, or as the result of, Adam's transgression. 'Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' Rom. v. 12. Not that all have 'sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,' as this Apostle argues in verse 14; that is, by personal transgression; but by, or through, Adam, as their representative, all have sinned; and the penalty of the law for sin being death, as a necessary consequence, all must die."

⁴Ibid.

exist) eternally for original sin.¹ Christ's sacrifice is vicarious—he has died the penalty for man's sin. In the case of Christ, the terms "first" and "second" death are not so crucial since the important thing is the death itself.²

Stephenson did not question that man was lost spiritually, but in the final analysis he understood that lostness to be the result of one's personal transgression rather than original sin.³ To avert annihilation man must accept by faith, repentance, and baptism the provisions of Christ's vicarious work.⁴

Aside from very brief references to Stephenson's work in advertisements and at least one response in the Review and Herald,⁵ the effect of Stephenson's work on Adventist thinking can only be conjectured. From and Haddock have recognized that Stephenson's arguments on Arianism

¹Ibid.: "Numerous texts . . . might be quoted, [which] bear united testimony to the fact, that the penalty of God's law, for original sin, is strictly enforced upon the condemned, and the guilty." Stephenson quotes Rom 5:16-21 and Gal 3:22: "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

²Ibid., p. 74: Since all must pay the ultimate penalty for personal sin, Christ's death is a substitute for that penalty, and does not affect the penalty for original sin whatever, that is, temporary death. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 113.

³Stephenson's use of "original sin" is peculiar when compared to traditional uses of the term. The anarthrous use of the designation has usually referred to the depraved state of man. For Stephenson this term means simply what it would mean with an article, i.e., the original sin, or Adamic sin, or Adam's sin, or the first transgression. This use would be used by Adventists less and less as the years progressed, and more and more they would substitute the more logical terminology, i.e., Adam's sin. This investigation shows that during the first fifty years the term gathered no other theological nuances than this simple qualification.

⁴Ibid., p. 76.

⁵See Leonard Eggleston, "Letter to James White," RH 6:17 (December 12, 1854):136, where the writer praises the truth he has received regarding the "penalty for Adamic transgression" and conditionalism and announces his donation to help with the spread of Stephenson's work.

and the Atonement were regularly employed in the presentations of prominent Adventist leaders.¹ When Stephenson's book was finally taken off the market in 1861 following his disconnection,² his arguments regarding original sin were retained in the book (by J. H. Waggoner) which replaced it.³ So despite his disconnection Stephenson's influence continued in the representative Adventist literature and represents a link between Storrs and later presentations in the Review and Herald on the subject.

D. P. Hall

In his articles, Hall also argued from the wholistic view of man as the truly Scriptural position.⁴ When God told Adam he would die, he did not mean his spirit would return to dust, nor was he speaking simply to an inanimate lump of non-conscious clay when he spoke with man. These logical observations, Hall thought, demonstrate that man cannot be split in the way "popular theology" attempts to do.⁵

¹Froom, Movement of Destiny, pp. 152-155, 289-290; and Robert Haddock, "A History of the Doctrine of the Sanctuary in the Advent Movement 1800-1905." B.D. thesis, SDA Theological Seminary, 1970, p. 196.

²His actual apostasy occurred in 1855, but his book continued to be advertised and sold through the Review and Herald office for another six years. Stephenson's work was advertised for the last time in the Review and Herald 18:4 (June 18, 1861):32.

³Waggoner wrote a lengthy series of articles on the subject of the Atonement in the fall of 1863, and these articles were published as a book entitled The Atonement in 1868. SDAs apparently felt the need for a volume during the interim between Stephenson's apostasy and Waggoner's work as evidenced by the periodic printing of Albert Barnes' material on the subject. See, for example, in the Review and Herald 18:16 (September 17, 1861):122-123. For a critique of Stephenson's book see Froom, Movement of Destiny, pp. 289-290. However, in light of the fact that Stephenson's arguments regarding Adamic sin are retained in Waggoner's work, any suggestion dismissing Stephenson as of no influence in regard to this issue should be rejected.

⁴"The Mortality of Man," p. 25. Cf. "Man Not Immortal," p. 42.

⁵Hall, "The Mortality of Man," p. 25. Hall called any non-wholistic

Like Storrs and Stephenson, Hall contended that Adam was created neither moral nor immoral, neither mortal nor immortal.¹ Moral character is not created but is "the result of action towards law,"² and Adam's "first positive character was that of a sinner," thus his action in Eden formed his character and by the same token produced mortality, since this was the threatened penalty for disobedience.³

Death is the opposite of life, the "deprivation of life,"⁴ and thus can only be defined with relation to life. It is the "unbuilding of man, the returning of the newly-made man to the elements from which he was created."⁵ Popular theology has confused the issues by ("glibly") asserting

view of man "nonsense" and an "absurdity." He presents his view: "There is yet another view which makes all plain: God made of the dust of the ground a being called man, he gave him life, which constituted him a conscious, intelligent and responsible being. Consciousness, intelligence and responsibility, then, inhere in the organized man, the living soul, and not in an immortal soul, put into the dust." The true, Scriptural view for Hall teaches ("Man Not Immortal," p. 129) "that man is a unity, composed of dust, his mental and moral nature inhering in the organized man. That death reduces the entire man to a state of unconsciousness, when all his functions physical, mental and moral, cease. That the entire man is mortal. That immortality is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, to the faithful only, to be conferred at the second coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the just."

¹"The Mortality of Man," p. 18: "He [Adam] had newly come from the hand of his Creator, physically, intellectually and morally good. Very good was pronounced upon man in connection with every thing else which God created and made. But what was his character, and nature? Was he holy or unholy, mortal or immortal or in a state of susceptibility?"

²Ibid. "Moral character, is not the subject of creation; it is the result of action towards law, or a rule of some kind, having previous knowledge of the existence of such law or rule." Storrs had used the same expression but had spoken of action toward a person, rather than toward a law [see above, p. 222].

³Ibid.

⁴Hall, "Man Not Immortal, p. 137.

⁵Hall, "The Mortality of Man, p. 19.

that death is to be understood as "spiritual, temporal, and eternal."¹

Only physical, literal death upholds both the evidence of Scriptural testimony and the rules of logical rationale. Man suffers death as a penalty for Adamic sin. First, he receives a "dying nature," from being in the line of Adam ("we are now mortal wholly"),² and upon being born he begins to die.³ Second, he returns to dust. This was a natural consequence of exclusion from the tree of life which, Hall maintains, Adam had never touched or eaten from before or after the Fall.⁴ Exclusion from the tree of

¹Ibid., p. 18. Cf. Westminster Confession 6.6 (Leith, 202): By sin man is "made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal." Hall rejects this view and examines each alternative. If death is eternal misery then countless millions are cast into this state because of Adam's first and single sin, for Scripture says, "this death passed from Adam to all his posterity." Since the threat to Adam was unconditional all must suffer it, Hall argues; thus God is made out to be a cruel tyrant (hence its error). A second alternative makes little more sense to Hall. If the death threatened is spiritual death, or an inherited "state of sin," i.e., depravity, then the penalty and the crime have become confused with each other. To Hall such a view is "ridiculous" for it has God saying: Since you have become a sinner, as your penalty I will pronounce that you are a sinner! Rather, Hall contends, sinning was the "guilt," not the "punishment." Furthermore, Christ could not have paid the penalty of "spiritual" death—he would have had to come under the dominion of sin, i.e., become a sinner, but according to Scripture this he did not do—"he was without sin."

²Hall, "Man Not Immortal," p. 145.

³Hall, "The Mortality of Man," p. 19. Appeal is made here to the marginal reading of the KJV, "dying thou shalt die."

⁴Ibid. Hall argues that had Adam eaten of the tree he would have been immortal. Without that fruit he contracted a dying, mortal nature. "The tree of life was the means provided by God for conferring immortality and eternal life, upon Adam if he should prove obedient. . . . Adam did not eat of this tree before he sinned." Hall bases this conclusion on two factors: (1) the Biblical record—primarily on the adverb "also" in Gen 3:22, which he takes to mean "in like manner" and (2) his assumption as to how immortality was conferred by way of the tree. Hall apparently assumed that a single eating gave immortality. Contrast Hall's view with that of Ellen White ["The Christian Warfare," RH 74:4 (January 26, 1897):49]: "As Adam and Eve ate of this tree [of life], they acknowledged their dependence upon God. The tree of life possessed the power to perpetuate life, and as long as they ate of it, they could not die. The lives of the antediluvians were protracted because of the life-giving power of this tree, which was transmitted to them from Adam and Eve."

life has dire consequences for Adam's posterity, namely, the inheritance of Adam's condition.¹

This view of mortality is Hall's perception of "sinful flesh"² which Christ sweeps away in the literal resurrection—for those who have accepted Christ's work: eternal life; for those who are "disobedient" (personal sinners): eternal, literal death.³ The Atonement brings "immortality, incorruptibility, and endless life," through the "second Adam," the representative of the race.⁴ These benefits are bestowed at the resurrection.

In summary, the main views of Storrs, Stephenson, and Hall are essentially indistinguishable. The same major elements are present in all three: wholism, the middle nature of Adam, death as literal and physical reality, personal sins as the determining factor in personal salvation, and corruption of nature as "dying to die" or "dying thou shalt die."

¹Hall, "The Mortality of Man," p. 19. "He could confer no better condition or nature upon his posterity than he had himself; hence this is the condition of all the sons of Adam, this day, unless God has worked a miracle in their deliverance. Enoch and Elijah, and all the faithful who are alive at the second appearing of Christ, will prove exceptions to this general rule."

²Throughout his discussion of the effects of Adam's sin on his posterity, Hall recognizes "corruptibility," "mortality," "corruptible seed," "born of the flesh," "earthy," "natural," "sinful flesh," "dying," and "mortal," as synonymous, complementary terms. A simple term for Hall's understanding of these concepts would be "mortal dying man." The answer to this critical problem is to be found in the immortality and eternal life provided through Jesus—"the resurrection from the dead, or a change equivalent thereto." "In Adam we all die" is not to be understood as referring to spiritual death nor is "be made alive" in Christ to be understood as spiritual rebirth. These are phrases closely related to the fact that man is in a present sinful, i.e., mortal, predicament. Note (ibid.): "Here then we see the real condition of Adam: a mortal, dying creature, toiling and sweating out his existence, and doomed to return to the dust from whence he was taken. In this condition he begat his first son. He could confer no better condition or nature upon his posterity than he had himself; . . ." The condition, state, nature, given by Adam to his posterity is mortality. That is "sinful flesh."

³Ibid.

⁴Hall, "Man Not Immortal," p. 35. Cf. on this point, *ibid.*, p. 139.

J. N. Loughborough

In an extensive series of articles in the Review and Herald, Loughborough (1832-1924) incorporated the arguments of Storrs, Stephenson, and Hall into mainline Adventist theology in a way that would prove typical for a number of years to come. Like Hall he set the argument in an anthropological context. But the central elements were unchanged from those of his predecessors.

Examining the original nature of Adam and insisting on the same wholistic presuppositions,¹ Loughborough contended that the original image of God in man should not be thought of in terms of morality. A moral image implied character and man had no character like God's when he was created.² Rather, Adam was "left to form his own character."³ Furthermore, Adam was created neither mortal nor immortal for his nature was contingent on his passing the probationary test. True, Adam was created "upright" and "incorrupt," but that did not mean he had either moral character or inherent immortality.⁴

When Adam fell, he became subject to death. In this death his posterity suffer as well in that they die. What is the nature of that death

¹Loughborough, "Is the Soul Immortal?" pp. 41-42.

²Ibid., p. 36: "Man was in the image of God before the breath of life was breathed into him; afterwards he is called a living soul. We see at once that this image of God in which man is formed cannot be a moral image; for it would involve the absurdity that inanimate matter possessed a character like God. If it be a fact that man was made literally in the image of God, we have been taught wrong in regard to the nature of that God."

³Ibid., p. 42.

⁴Ibid.: "It must be apparent to the mind of all, with a few moments' consideration, that no character can be developed without a law. . . . In the formation of character, there must be some test, some rule by which we are to walk."

(also called the "first death")?¹ It is literal not spiritual.² There is a spiritual death which is a state of being "dead in sins," but it is not the penalty threatened to Adam.³

While Loughborough recognized man's sinful condition, he developed no position in these articles which would lead either to a theory of inherited depravity or guilt. The "first" death is the penalty for Adamic sin, "spiritual" death is merely a consequence which naturally occurs. Adam could not pass on an incorruptible, i.e., non-dying, nature, since he did not have it to pass on.⁴ Therefore natural immortality is clearly an unbiblical concept.

¹Ibid., p. 35.

²Ibid., p. 42.

³Ibid. In the tradition of Storrs, Loughborough argued, "A person dead in sins must be one that is lost to all sense of the obligation he is under to obey God. We claim that this could not have been held out before Adam as a penalty; it was a natural consequence. If a man commits sin, and continues in those sins, he is spiritually dead. What should we think if the legislators of this Union, or any of its States, should pass a law stating that if a man committed murder, he should lose all sense of his obligation to keep that law, and that should be the penalty of his transgression?" Loughborough then adds yet another twist to the "spiritual death" objections: to see the threatened penalty as spiritual death creates problems for a correct perspective of Christ's work. If spiritual death is the penalty, then to be made alive in Christ would be conversion, for that is the divine answer to depravity. Hence, what would happen to the resurrection which is the answer to death? Here Loughborough suggests an impossible compromise with spiritualistic understandings of Scripture and a virtual sell-out to universalism. "Says Paul, (1 Cor. xv,) 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' If the death they died in Adam was a spiritual death, then being made alive in Christ from that death must be to be made holy. This also would be the first resurrection, as it brings men to life from the first death. This would make out that all men would finally be holy; for in Christ shall all be made alive."

⁴Ibid., p. 43: "Says the objector, your testimony from Scripture seems to show that Adam was not created immortal, yet I believe we are immortal. We inquire, from what source do we derive our immortality? It must be either inherent, derived from Adam, or else it comes to us directly from God. We reply, we did not get it from Adam, for he did not have it himself." Cf. Storrs, Six Sermons, p. 151: "Adam lost all claim to immortality—and therefore could not communicate it to his posterity"; Stephenson, "The Atonement," p. 10: "Of course he [Adam] could give his children no better nature than that which he himself possessed"; and Hall,

The soul is not immortal, though the "heathen philosophers" and "the papists" have taught so.¹

On what basis are men lost? Certainly not on the basis of Adam's sin. Because men sin they are lost and eventually die the "second" death (which proves even the wicked will be resurrected) unless they accept the plan of salvation.² Personal sins are transgressions of God's law overtly committed by those who imitate Adam's rebellion.³

The corrupt nature that man suffers, because of Adam's involving the race in sin, is therefore to be understood in terms of "dying thou shalt die," as explained by the marginal reading of the KJV on Gen 2:17.⁴ No transmitted guilt is involved since all men are responsible for their actual or personal sins and are only mortal through Adam's sin.

For Loughborough, this view successfully answers the universalist (who would interpret the "all" of 1 Cor 15:22 in the sense of all saved), and the spiritualist [not Spiritist] (who would interpret the text to mean experiential conversion). When Paul says "as in Adam all die, so in Christ

"The Mortality of Man," p. 19. "Here we see the real condition of Adam: a mortal, dying creature, toiling and sweating out his existence and doomed to return to the dust from whence he was taken. In this condition he begat his first son. He could confer no better condition or nature upon his posterity than he had himself; . . ."

¹Loughborough, "Is the Soul Immortal?" pp. 50-51.

²Ibid., p. 82. "If they are to die because of their sins, they must be raised from that death which they die because of Adam's sin, before they can die a death for their personal sins. The death men are to die for personal transgressions according to Rev. xx, is the second death."

³Ibid., p. 97: "This death which is here spoken of as the wages of sin, cannot be the death men die in Adam; for that death is a consequent on the sin of Adam, and not our own sins. By transgression, Adam became mortal, and has transmitted mortality to us. Men die the first death, because they are mortal. The second death is the wages of sin; and this all must suffer whose names are not found in the Lamb's book of life."

⁴Ibid., p. 42.

shall all be made alive," he means that everyone dies temporally or literally in Adam because of this Fall, i.e., the first death.¹ But because of the redemptive work of Christ all will be brought to face judgment, for their personal sins, in the resurrection.²

It was the conviction of Loughborough that this view upheld the justice of God and taught the truth concerning the nature of man. The views

¹This view of 1 Cor 15:22 was a standard interpretation among early Adventists and considered a safeguard against the spiritualizing views of death and "new birth." It is typified in the following "selected" or anonymous statement entitled, "Brief Thoughts on the Nature of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Final Destiny of Man," RH 7:26 (March 27, 1856):202: "If Christ had not come as the resurrection and the life, there would have been no future existence for man. And until he was promised, there was no curse that reached beyond the grave. It is in this sense that as 'in Adam all died, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' All lost their existence in Adam: all shall have it again in Christ restored to them. But there is a second death; and as there was an extinction of being in prospect before Adam which was only prevented by Christ's coming as the resurrection and the life, the second death will be an entire extinction of being—a destruction for which there is no remedy, being a destruction of both soul and body in hell. The principle of life will be destroyed, and there can be no resurrection from the second death."

²This is so prevalent an understanding in early Adventism that this extensive reference is merited: "We understand that Christ's death, to a certain extent, affects every man. He by the grace of God tasted 'death for every man.' He proffers to all men life again. As they have passed into the grave, as a consequent on Adam's transgression, and not as a reward for their own sin, he will give them all a resurrection from that death. See the testimony of Paul on this subject. Rom. v,18. 'Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' This life is not eternal life; for as we have already shown, that is to be obtained by believing in Christ.

"Paul's testimony is, in 1 Cor. xv,22,23, 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming.' But you inquire, What is the order of the resurrection of the wicked? I answer, according to Rev. xx,5, They live not again until a thousand years after the resurrection of the saints. We understand the saints will reign with Christ until the last enemy is destroyed. John says they will reign a thousand years. The destruction of the wicked cannot take place until after they are raised; so these testimonies would seem to give the order of the resurrection of the wicked, as in the close of the thousand years after Christ's second coming." Loughborough, "Is the Soul Immortal?" p. 82.

of sin and anthropology are so intertwined that they appear to be symbiotic.

Summary

Adventism acquired its view of the effects of Adam's sin in the midst of the New England debate which was essentially a response to John Taylor's challenge of old Calvinistic ideas of Federal Theology.¹ These notions were bound up with predestinarian presuppositions which involved the imputation of Adam's guilt and other Augustinian and medieval interpretations of the Biblical material (e.g., original righteousness).

The conditionalism of Taylor was preserved in Storrs and accepted by Adventism along with the new view of original sin. The line can be clearly seen through Storrs, Stephenson, Hall, and finally Loughborough.²

The First Decade of Adventist Thought: 1850-1860

In the summer of 1849, the Present Truth, the first publication of the group destined to become the Seventh-day Adventist church, came from the press under the editorial guidance of James White. It was small, eight pages in length, and enjoyed a run of only 1000 copies, but with this paper

¹It is relevant to recognize that John Taylor was a conditionalist, a fact seldom mentioned by historical theologians, but one which seems helpful in light of the unitary, organic nature of the doctrine. It throws up the real suggestion that if these views on Adam's sin are indeed Biblical, they may suggest also the Biblical validity of conditionalism. For Taylor and his spiritual descendant, George Storrs, conditionalism and the new view of sin were indeed considered inseparable. The argument was presented by them as organic and symbiotic. Perhaps this helps explain the natural fragility of the New Haven doctrine which came only half way, recognizing the inconsistency of the hamartiology of Federal theology especially in its implications for God's justice and man's individual responsibility, but failing to repudiate the old creationism and immortal-soul views which were continually cropping up to present serious problems. These suggestions are made here as a topic for some future fruitful investigation.

²No historian of Adventist thought would question that Loughborough was a mainline, faithful, and loyal Adventist pioneer, therefore it seems appropriate to conclude this section with his views.

the publication of Adventist thought began. Because the first decade largely reflects the thinking of the post-disappointment Adventists, in an undeveloped or inherited form, this section treats it as a unit by itself in order to observe the earliest stirrings of the pioneers' thoughts.

The year before (1848) had included six "Sabbath conferences" held in the New England homes of various Adventist believers, where Scripture was studied around the clock for up to three and four days duration in an effort to evaluate the real truth about the Adventist ordeal and Christian thought in general.¹ Consequently, a consensus was reached with regard to eight beliefs which would form the nucleus of teachings among the new company of believers and result in an identity of the fledgling church.

Richard Schwarz has listed these doctrinal points as such:

- (1) The imminent, personal, premillennial second advent;
- (2) The twofold ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, whose cleansing had begun in 1844;
- (3) The seventh-day Sabbath;
- (4) God's special supernatural enlightenment through Ellen White;
- (5) The duty to proclaim all three angels' messages;
- (6) Conditional immortality and death as a dreamless sleep;
- (7) The timing of the seven last plagues; and
- (8) The final, complete extinction of the wicked after the millennium.²

From this list one can see that at least two years before their regular publishing venture began the segment of believers who would become SDAs had agreed on their position regarding the conditional immortality of man and the annihilation of the wicked. This section surveys major concepts and contributors as they compare with the views delineated above. Emphasis here is laid on differences from those earliest views, but the survey notes: (1) the personalities of greatest importance to the movement, and (2) sources

¹Light Bearers to the Remnant, pp. 68-69.

²Ibid., p. 69.

that appeared in the main reading matter and seemed to influence Adventist thought during this decade.

James and Ellen White

During the first decade, James White (1821-1881), founder of the Seventh-day Adventist church and first editor of the Review and Herald, did not deal specifically with Adam's sin as a separate topic, but he mentions its penalty and writes some significant material about the salvation of children, thus demonstrating his New England Arminian perspectives. White made passing reference to the "present depraved constitution" of man but did not clarify his term sufficiently to determine a clear definition,¹ and he held that being "fallen" meant being under the control or power of sin, i.e., sinning, slighting God's grace, and rejecting his laws.²

White's most significant references to Adamic sin are in his two-part series on the Kingdom of God.³ Adam's Fall meant deprivation for his posterity on two levels: (1) he was deprived of his territorial dominion through "the revolt of all creatures;" and (2) he was deprived of his dominion of life—mortality was not part of the original plan but was the result of transgression (Rom 5:12).⁴ The second Adam was come to restore the earth

¹James White, "The Kingdom of God," RH 5:20 (June 13, 1854):154. White asserts that such a condition inhibits a person's knowledge of God.

²James White, "Patience," RH 6:11 (October 24, 1854):81; Cf. "The Law of God and Baptism," RH 6:11 (October 24, 1854):84. White sees all men as under sin's condemnation because of a life of transgression.

³"The Kingdom of God," RH 5:19-20 (May 30, June 13, 1854): 145-146, 153-155.

⁴Ibid., p. 145. Cf. James White, "The Better Times, or the Earth Redeemed," RH 3:21 (March 3, 1853):165: "By sin and its consequences, death, the earth was cursed—its beauty tarnished—and its rightful sovereign supplanted. Discontent, rebellion, hatred, sickness, sorrow, pain and death, became the patrimony of man. Man lost his life, and his heritage or kingdom. And now, the only hope of the race was in a second Adam."

and mankind.¹ These ideas are in the tradition of Storrs, Stephenson et. al., but no direct literary dependence is discernible.

Perhaps White's most enlightening statements are in reference to the innocence of children.² Querying what Jesus meant when he instructed his disciples to become like little children, White suggested (1) that children are innocent, (2) that children, while they do possess a "fallen and corrupt nature," are not "guilty" because of it;³ and finally, (3) that since they are "branches of Christ" they are born in a state of grace.⁴ Infants have the "spirit of Jesus Christ" dwelling in them because they come into the world under "the covenant of grace."⁵ There is clear reference, however, to the preparatory work of the spirit in subduing "the evil nature" so as to ready a person for the resurrection.⁶ This "old nature" lives with man until Christ

¹"The Kingdom of God," p. 145.

²Some indication of the Advent faith on this subject is seen in admonitions to train children in a way that will guard them from the wiles of Satan. See for example, A. A. Dodge, "Admonitions to Parents," RH 4:3 (June 23, 1853):21-23.

³"The Kingdom of God," p. 153. "Christ has cancelled the guilt of Adamic transgression, and in the resurrection of the last day, all the effects of the fall on the innocent, or justified, will be removed, not before."

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.*: "I cannot see that it is necessary that the child should ever be anything else but a Christian. If they are under the necessity of sinning voluntarily when they come to years, it cannot be accounted to them as sin; for they only do what they must. That they do usually follow their evil nature, rather than the teachings and stirrings of the Spirit, is freely granted; but not that there is any necessity that they should ever become voluntary offenders, or be anything else than true Christians. They come into being under the covenant of grace, and they may remain so." Cf. Josiah Hebner, "Letter to James White," RH 4:22 (December 6, 1853):175, who looks forward to seeing his son in the resurrection. His son died at three years of age.

⁶"The Kingdom of God," p. 153: "No one can be Christ's unless he has the Spirit of Christ. No one can be quickened from the dead and raised to eternal life unless he has the spirit in him which quickened Jesus Christ from the dead."

comes and does not expire until the resurrection, but that does not mean one must continue to pursue a life of sin. "Tempted we always shall be," White wrote, "a war with nature we always shall have; but the victory, through the power of an indwelling Christ is certain."¹

During the first decade, Ellen White's (1827-1915) treatment of Adam's sin contained embryonic notions in keeping with contemporary Adventist believers. Her depiction of the Fall of Adam and Eve follows very closely the skeletal structure of Gen 2-3, but she elaborates on the designs of Satan. His concern, in his enticement of Adam, was selfishly motivated: he wished the tree of life for himself, and if Adam sinned, he envisioned himself as the rightful owner of the tree and believed sin would be immortalized.² But God overruled and sent angels to guard the access to the tree, thus barring man from that immortality. Hence "the whole family of Adam must die," God determined.³ It was only because of Christ's devising a plan, that proved subsequently acceptable to the Father, that man became "subjects of grace."⁴

The tree of life was designed to give literal life, i.e., immortality.

¹Ibid. There are elements of New Haven teaching here, viz., that sinful nature is not properly called sin. For White, victory through Christ was the successful exercise of the believer's power to resist temptation when it comes to him through the nature.

²Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts, 4 vols. (Battle Creek: James White, 1858):1:21-22.

³Ibid., pp. 22-23; on p. 26 she describes mankind as as "race of rebels."

⁴Ibid., p. 22. The plan is described in the terminology of the Anselmic-Protestant tradition on the Atonement. Note terms such as "ransom," "sentence of death," "pardon," "merits of the blood," "obedience to the law," etc. The impression is left that this plan was devised after the Fall; however, later EGW makes it clear that the plan was no "after-thought." The Desire of Ages (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1898), p. 22.

The tree of life was to perpetuate immortality. I heard an angel ask, Who of the family of Adam had passed the flaming sword, and have partaken of the tree of life? I heard another angel answer, Not one of the family of Adam have passed that flaming sword, and partaken of that tree, therefore there is not an immortal sinner. The soul that sinneth it shall die an everlasting death; a death that will last forever, where there will be hope of a resurrection; and then the wrath of God will be appeased.¹

Ellen White dealt with elements of the traditional doctrine, but her views coincided more closely in meaning to those of her Adventist contemporaries. For example, she spoke of "the state of sin," a phrase which traditionally had been used by Christian theology to refer to original sin as depravity, but which to her meant personal sinning (as it also did to her fellow Adventists);² and she also wrote of the second death, "an everlasting death," that "the soul that sinneth" shall die.³ Personal sin can be "overcome," that is, it need not bear sway, maintain control, or hold dominion over the Christian.⁴

¹White, Spiritual Gifts, 1:114. EGW repeats Storrs' argument of death: "It was a marvel to me that Satan could succeed so well in making man believe that the words of God, The soul that sinneth it shall die, mean that the soul that sinneth it shall not die, but live eternally in misery. Said the angel, Life is life, whether it is in pain or happiness. Death is without pain, without joy, without hatred."

²Ellen G. White, "The Sinner's Trials," RH 13:23 (April 28, 1859):181. This conclusion is clear from the context: "I have been led to compare the life of the sinner with the life of the righteous. The sinner does not have a desire to please God; therefore can have no pleasing sense of his approbation. He does not enjoy his state of sin and worldly pleasure without trouble. He feels deeply the ills of this mortal life. O yes, at times he is fearfully troubled. He fears God, but does not love him" (Emphasis supplied). Cf. Testimonies, [1859] 1:190, for the same meaning in her use of "condition." She further uses "corruption" in the same way: "Man is so corrupt [i.e., through his sinning] that laws are made to throw the responsibility upon his own head. Some men do not fear to lie to their fellow man; but they have been taught, and the restraining Spirit of God has impressed them, that it is a fearful thing to lie to God" (ibid., p. 202).

³Ellen G. White, "To the 'Little Flock,'" Present Truth 1:9 (April, 1850):71-72.

⁴A major exposition on this overcoming is seen in EGW's Testimony, number 5 [1859], entitled, "The Laodicean Church" (Testimonies 1:185-195),

We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him.¹

Subdue the carnal mind, reform the life, and the poor mortal frame will not be so idolized. If the heart is reformed, it will be seen in the outward appearance.²

Here she speaks of personal sin and adds no additional meaning to that already held by the Advent believers of the first decade.³

The bulk of Ellen White's material (of relevance to this study) is not explicit when it comes to analytical purposes. For example, in her writings on parental guidance for children, she asserts that children have "passions" which parents need to control.⁴ Again, parents are to recognize

where she exhorts with terms such as: "the heart must be purified from sins" (p. 186), "come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome" (p. 187), "subdue those sins God hates" (p. 188). In all of this, however, she clearly makes good works the result of one's true profession of faith and follows in the tradition of the Apostle James: "You profess to believe the truth; let your works testify to the fact. Unless your faith works, it is dead. Nothing but a living faith will save you in the fearful scenes which are just before you" (p. 192).

¹Ellen G. White, "Be Zealous and Repent" [1857] in Testimonies, 1:144.

²Ellen G. White, "Young Sabbathkeepers" [1857] in *ibid.*, p. 162.

³It will be shown that some early Adventists believed that the new birth referred to the eschatological resurrection. One reason given for this view was the recognition that (1) no one this side of the second coming lives a sinless life and (2) the new birth provides a state where one "cannot sin" [1 John 3:9]. Hence, (3) the new birth, without which no one can inherit eternal life [John 3:3, 5], cannot have occurred yet. Preparatory to the "new birth" was the work of the Spirit that brought victory in the personal life and empowered one to overcome the power of individual sin. What influence this view may have had on EGW is not clear though there is no evidence that she ever held this view of the new birth.

⁴Ellen G. White, "Duty of Parents to Their Children," RH 6:6 (September 19, 1854):45: "Parents suffer them [children of 10-12 months of age] to indulge in evil tempers and passions without subduing or correcting them, and by so doing they cherish and nourish these evil passions until they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength." *Ibid.*, p. 46: "Parents, it is your duty to have your children in perfect subjection, having all their passions and evil tempers subdued. . . . Commence while they are young, when impressions can be more easily made, and their evil

that they "stand in the place of God" to their children and must therefore be faithful to their trust.¹ She pleads with parents to keep their children separate from the "world" so as not to partake of the world's "wickedness" and become "corrupted."² She speaks of children as "the lawful prey of the enemy, because they are not subjects of grace."³ Finally, she sees "little ones" in the new earth, which raises the question of who the little ones are and how they got there (a question which she leaves unanswered).⁴

Uriah Smith

The most prolific writer on the subject of Adam's sin during the first decade was Uriah Smith (1832-1903), a long-time Adventist editor and

tempers subdued before they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength." She does not clarify if these are manifestations of original sin as depravity. Cf. "To the Church," RH 6:31 (June 12, 1856):246; "Parental Responsibility" [1855], in *Testimonies*, I:118-120, and "Young Sabbathkeepers" [1857], in *ibid.*, pp. 154-164.

¹EGW, "Duty of Parents to Their Children," p. 45.

²*Ibid.*, p. 46. EGW likens the prayers of parents for their children to the blood on the doorposts of Egypt which assured "covering" for the children: "He [Christ] . . . will listen to our prayers for them, and the seal, or mark of believing parents will cover their children, if they are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

³*Ibid.*: "Children are the lawful prey of the enemy, because they are not subjects of grace, have not experienced the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, and the evil angels have access to these children; and some parents are careless and suffer them to work with but little restraint. Parents have a great work to do in this matter, by correcting and subduing their children and then by bringing them to God and claiming his blessing upon them. By the faithful and untiring efforts of the parents, and the blessing and grace entreated of God upon the children, the power of the evil angels will be broken, a sanctifying influence is shed upon the children and the powers of darkness must give back." Emphasis supplied. Compare James White, "The Kingdom of God," p. 153 (see above, p. 248).

⁴Ellen G. White, "Bereavement," YI 4:4 (April, 1858):29. Cf. *Christian Experience and Teachings* [1851] (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1922), p. 63.

early pioneer.¹ He first alluded to the effects of Adam's sin on his posterity in a lengthy poem of nine installments in the Review and Herald.² The reference reflects the Adventist emphasis on the physical effects of Adam's sin known to them as the "dying nature" of man.

Man opened thus the gaping flood-gates, wide,
Of Sin and Death, who upward rushed, apace,
With all their direful retinue, deformed;
Loathsome disease, with countless hideous shapes,
And keen and racking pains, and cheerless grief,
Misfortunes, and a thousand eating ills,
That eat the happiness of life away;
These, Adam thus let in; these him destroyed;
And these, on all his offspring down the stream
Of time, have ever busy warred, and fixed
Their deadly fangs, and worn and wasted down,
Till Death, e'er active on his ceaseless founts,
Comes in at last to gather up the spoils.
Thus do they hasten on both man and beast,
And thus all living, and all lifeless things,
Down through the crumbling alleys of decay.
And must this ever be? Must ever thus
God's glorious design frustrated stand?
Not ever! for mankind's Redeemer, he,
The Son of God, the Second Adam, will,
What our first parents lost, doubly restore.³

Smith's work during the first decade moved toward a more precise clarification of Adam's sin in the context of two loci: (1) man's mortality and (2) man's sanctification experience.

Views on the New Birth

Smith's earliest treatment of an issue suggesting the element of

¹In Conditionalist Faith, 2:689, Froom recognizes Smith as the "representative voice of Seventh-day Adventists" on conditionalism for the last part of the nineteenth century.

²Uriah Smith, "The Warning Voice of Time and Prophecy," RH 3:22-26 (March 17, 31, April 14, 28, May 12, 1853):169-170, 177-178, 185-186, 192-194, 201-202. "The Warning Voice of Time and Prophecy—Part 2," RH 4:3, 5-7 (June 23, July 21, August 4, 11, 1853):17-19, 33-34, 41-43, 49-50.

³*Ibid.*, p. 49. Emphasis supplied. Here is the same stress that Storrs placed on the "sinful" nature as two-fold: (1) dying and (2) dead, a problem which finds its solution in the gift of restoration through Christ.

original sin was the question of the "new birth" of the Christian. During his first year as editor of the Review and Herald Smith ran a short series of articles on the subject as written by E. R. Pinney, a Baptist Millerite preacher (d.1855), and his colleague, T. F. Barry.¹ The material had originally appeared in Adventist literature in 1845 shortly following the Great Disappointment.²

Pinney and Barry held the position that the spiritual birth of John 3 referred to the eschatological resurrection. The water birth, they contended, was not to be confused with baptism but was rather to be understood as the natural, or literal, birth that everyone experiences who enters this world.³ If baptism were this "water" birth, they argued, then everyone who would finally be saved would have to be baptized, a position they considered Biblically and logically untenable.⁴ Both the terms "flesh" and "spirit" were to be understood literally to mean material and immaterial. Therefore, when a person experienced this new birth he would actually become "spiritual," i.e., immaterial in nature, or "heavenly," born after the image of the "Heavenly Adam, who is a quickening spirit."⁵ To be born of water is to be born flesh, while to be born of the spirit is to be born spirit. Hence, "conversion is not the new birth."⁶ Pinney and Barry concluded that the new birth takes place at the second advent of Christ, and they attempted to demonstrate conclusively that this was what Christ

¹E. R. Pinney and T. F. Barry, "Ye Must Be Born Again," RH 7:24-25 (March 13, 20, 1856):186-188, 194-195.

²*Ibid.*, p. 186. Smith's introductory note implies some reservation regarding the Pinney-Barry view that the water birth of John 3 refers to man's natural birth. He invites reader comment on the point.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 188.

was telling Nicodemus in the night visit.¹ Much rests on this peculiar view of 1 Cor 15:44-49 which speaks of Christ as a "quickenning spirit," as connected to John 3:3, 5, and 1 John 3:9ff.²

Now, although we may allow that men may live here, and sometimes do by the assistance of God's grace without sin for a season, yet are any prepared to take the ground that the best men that ever lived attained a state here that rendered impossible for them to sin? I presume not. Then are they not born of God. But if any doubt lingers in your mind, this same writer settles it. Chap. ii,1. "Little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Here John supposes we may sin after conversion. And provision he assures us is made for such. But in the other place he assures us that if born again we cannot sin. I am aware many efforts have been made to pervert this message by modifying its meaning to suit our theories. But there it stands a positive declaration, and eternal refutation of all such theories. They cannot sin because they are born of God. Then conversion we see clearly is not the new birth.³

Two responses to this article appeared in subsequent issues of the paper. The first was sent in by E. S. Maltby who produced several texts which seemed to counter the Pinney-Barry position.⁴ However, in answering Maltby, Smith indicated that he agreed with the authors' conclusions and proceeded to justify them against Maltby's argument.⁵

That the new birth is not conversion, appears very evident from the fact that a person after conversion, does not fulfill the characteristics of one who has been born of the Spirit. He is not as the wind, unseen in his movements; (John iii,8;) nor is it impossible for him to sin; (1 John iii,9; v,18) he has only received that Spirit into his heart which will, if he cherishes it, quicken his mortal body at the last day." [sic] Rom. viii,11.⁶

¹Ibid. Cf. p. 194.

²Ibid., p. 195.

³Ibid., p. 194.

⁴E. S. Maltby, "Letter to Bro. Smith," RH 8:1 (August 10, 1856):8: "Can we be called sons before we are born [Rom 8:16, Gal 3:26, 4:6-7]? Can we not love God and believe on his Son before the resurrection [1 John 5:1]? We are to be sanctified through the truth. May the Lord deliver us from the wisdom of man."

⁵Uriah Smith, "Ye Must Be Born Again," RH 8:1 (April 10, 1856):8.

⁶Ibid.

John Byington, who later became the first president of the General Conference (in 1863), insisted that the Spirit was the agency for the renewing of the mind and suggested that Smith's argument sounded as though the wicked also experienced the new birth since they too would eventually be resurrected.¹ In his response Smith again presented the Pinney-Barry argument but did concede that perhaps he had not given enough emphasis to the working of the Spirit.²

Finally, Smith published two articles³ which he himself had written, in an effort to end all question on where he stood. He insisted that his view was that of all Adventist believers of his day.⁴ Two suggestions alone have been made, Smith argued, in theologians' attempts to understand the Biblical phrase, "the new birth": (1) conversion; (2) resurrection.⁵ But in arriving at a sound interpretation one must recognize that the birth of the Spirit involves becoming spirit. This phraseology is to be understood in its most literal sense. John 3 is not dealing with "inward affections and disposition," nor is it treating of the operation of the Spirit. But rather

¹"Letter to Bro. Smith," RH 8:4 (May 8, 1856):28. Byington argues that "born" and "begotten" are synonymous terms in the New Testament and that any distinction made between them (that would result in one referring to conversion and the other to the resurrection) would be contrived. He concludes his argument with a penetrating question that reveals a primary flaw in the position: "If in a strict, literal sense we apply the term, born of God, to the resurrection, do not the wicked experience the new birth, as they have a resurrection?" In a postscript to his letter he suggests that conversion, the work of grace in one's life, demands one's involvement and care but that the resurrection is not something over which a man has a say. This is his way of indicating that, in his opinion, the view of Pinney and Barry does not line up with Scripture or practical, common sense.

²Uriah Smith, "Ye Must Be Born Again," RH 8:4 (May 8, 1856):28-29.

³Uriah Smith, "The New Birth," RH 9:11-12 (January 15, 22, 1857):84, 92-93.

⁴Ibid., p. 92.

⁵Ibid., p. 84.

one who is born of the spirit becomes "like the wind, unseen and unheard in his movements."¹ Such can only be fulfilled at the resurrection.

Next, Smith formulates a syllogism based on the experience of Christ. After claiming to have demonstrated that Christ's resurrection was a birth he presents his premise that (1) Christ experienced "the new birth."² Since (2) he obviously was not a sinner and needed no conversion, then Christ could not have experienced a spiritual rebirth, but had to have had a literal one. Hence (3) the new birth is the literal resurrection. Christ was the "firstborn" of the brethren, i.e., his new status resided in his having been resurrected.³ The conclusion is clear to Smith: "The new birth is not conversion."⁴

No Advent believer, . . . will be willing to take the ground that the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of the believers, and was set up at Christ's first advent, and that conversion is the birth of the Spirit by which we become members thereof. This is the view that still flourishes under the darkness of modern orthodoxy, but it cannot exist in the light of present truth.⁵

Smith ends his articles by admitting that there needs to be a preparation for this resurrection, or new birth. Such preparatory work comes through the process of moral change in the life and is brought about

¹Ibid.: "Several important facts are here settled; namely, that as the result of a natural birth is an earthly body, a body of flesh, so the result of the birth of the Spirit, is a spiritual body; for it is of the body, the person, that the Saviour speaks, and not of the inward affections and disposition. Again, we learn that every one that is born of the spirit, is like the wind, unseen and unheard in his movements. Here is a point which all should mark well, it does not say that so is the Spirit of God in its operations, as some would have this passage read, but so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

²Ibid., p. 92.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid. Emphasis supplied. Storrs had taken the same position in an 1844 article that was reprinted in 1854 in the Review and Herald. See "The Kingdom of God," RH 5:16 (May 9, 1854):121-122.

through the impartation of the Spirit. But this is only by faith and adoption, and should be considered only as preparation for the actual new birth.¹

View of Adam's Sin

Smith's view of original sin was virtually identical in all significant respects to that of Storrs, Stephenson, and Hall. Man was created under a covenant of works and had he not sinned, he could have been justified through obedience² (the passing of the probationary test.)³ Nevertheless, man did not pass the test and thus created the need for a Savior who would impute his righteousness to him.⁴ It was the passing of the test through the keeping of God's law that produced character, and though Smith was not as explicit as those before him, he implied that Adam was created without morality.⁵ Adam was no longer able to keep the law of God unaided⁶

¹Ibid. Cf. Uriah Smith, "Is There a Change of Heart?" RH 10:9 (July 2, 1857):72. Like Storrs', Smith's presentation of the subject was materialistic and literal. It also included the polemic against "orthodox" theology which had spiritualized truth. Smith was reticent to move away from an intensely literal approach.

²Uriah Smith, "Righteousness by the Law," RH 13:18 (March 24, 1859):140: "Had he [Adam] not sinned, but his probation ended and he been saved, . . . then righteousness or justification, would have been by the law, and in this case Christ need not, and would not, have died. But man sinned and fell. . . . It was man's duty to keep the whole law in all its perfection. When then he transgressed, he found himself staggering under a burden, which of himself he could never remove."

³Uriah Smith, "The Evil and Remedy," RH 14:8 (July 14, 1859):60.

⁴Smith, "Righteousness by Law," p. 140: "Now Christ comes in a ransom to cover by his righteousness the transgressions of all those who will have faith in him. Thus man, through Christ, is imputed righteous and saved from the fearful consequences of his sin." Smith clearly states that the plan of salvation was "devised" after the Fall of man. See Uriah Smith, "Our Rule of Life," RH 9:18 (March 5, 1857):138.

⁵Ibid., p. 138: "The first pair were to form a character, but law is necessary to develop it."

⁶Uriah Smith, "Justification by the Law," RH 13:21 (April 14, 1859):164.

though with the help of faith in Christ man can keep it today.¹ Anthropologically, Adam brought death and mortality into the world through his sin.

His descendents must of course find themselves in a similar condition; the father could not confer upon the son a nature less corruptible than his own; the stream could not rise higher than the fountain; all must finally die. And had nothing further been done, and the race still been suffered to continue, they would only have lived a miserable life; till life's taper hopelessly expired. Death would then have held them in eternal dominion; and as it was recorded of each of them that all the days that they lived, were so many, and they died, no bright star of hope would have shed its divine light over their gloomy graves.²

The penalty of Adam's sin is death,³ not spiritual death, which is recognized as "depravity," not the unbiblical theory of eternal misery.⁴ It is a death that renders the soul (person) back to the dust.⁵

The similarity of Smith's position to that of Hall's is seen in this comparison:

<u>HALL (1854)</u>	<u>SMITH (1859)</u>
"Thou shalt surely die!" What kind of death did God threaten Adam, in case of disobedience? Popular theologians	"Thou shalt surely die." What was meant by this sentence? <u>Death spiritual, death temporal</u> and <u>death eternal</u> , is the <u>glib</u>

¹Ibid.: "Aided by faith in Christ we can keep it. Yes. Then is any man now, necessarily a transgressor? No!"

²Uriah Smith, "What Is the Penalty of the Law?" RH 9:23 (April 9, 1857):180.

³Ibid.: "Mortality, ending in death, had been incurred, and must be endured. . . . The penalty then, of the law of God for the sin of our first parents introduced death into the world. This penalty was unconditional; there was no proviso to the sentence, 'In the day that thou eatest. . . .'"

⁴Uriah Smith, "Mortal or Immortal? Which?" RH 14:19 (September 29, 1859):147.

⁵Ibid., p. 138. Cf. Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 13:10 (January 27, 1859):80: "That the unsanctified state of the sinner is represented as a state of death, none will deny [Eph. 2:11]. But to make this the death threatened to Adam, as some do, is to confound the crime with the penalty. We have always considered that very profound theology, ironically speaking, which would make God say to Adam, 'In the day thou sinnest, thou shalt surely be a sinner!'"

answer very glibly, Death spiritual, death temporal, and death eternal.

Let us look at spiritual death. What is this but being in a state of sin? This, then, was the crime not the penalty: this was the guilt, not the punishment: this confounds cause and effect—sin and its penalty—and would represent the Judge of all the earth, in the execution of it, saying, Adam, you have sinned; now as the penalty for this act of disobedience, I pronounce you a sinner.

How ridiculous this would look in a human judge: Infinitely more so in the Divine.¹

The ultimate destiny of man does not lie with Adam, since original sin comes to all "irrespective of age, character or condition."³ It is personal sin that decides man's fate for it is here that man can rectify what Adam did by electing to accept the work of Christ.⁴

The corrupt nature is the "dying" state and a dead condition.⁵ Ultimately this state is one of "non-existence," but man was "as good as" dead when he sinned and would have died that very day had it not been for the plan of salvation. Eventually the first death claimed him because it was

answer thousands of religious teachers.

But what is death spiritual? It is a state of sin and alienation from God. But this was the result of Adam's act of disobedience and not its penalty. To make this a part of the threatening is to make God say to Adam, "In the day thou sinnest, thou shalt surely be a sinner!"

This is making too sad nonsense of the words of Jehovah to be for a moment tolerated.²

¹D. P. Hall, "The Mortality of Man," RH 6:3 (August 29, 1854):18-19.

²Uriah Smith, "Mortal or Immortal? Which?" p. 147. See also, Smith, "To Correspondents," p. 80.

³Smith, "What Is the Penalty of the Law?" p. 180.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁵Smith, "Mortal or Immortal? Which?" p. 147: "The sentence of death passed upon Adam in that very day. He had no sooner broken that command, the penalty of which was declared to be death, than he was as good as a dead man. He then entered upon a dying state."

an "unconditional" penalty.¹ It is this "corruptible, decaying nature" that Adam's posterity inherits from him for "the father could not confer upon the son a nature less corruptible than his own; the stream could not rise higher than the fountain; all must finally die."²

The answer to the corrupt nature is the "new birth," e.g., the resurrection.

Inasmuch as all die for original sin, or on account of the sin of Adam no one can die for his own personal sins, without first being raised to life again; and thus we find expressly declared, as we should unavoidably conclude from the facts now before us, "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."³

In his treatment of the penalty for Adam's sin, Smith reproduced the argument of Storrs, Stephenson, Hall, and Loughborough. He understood spiritual death to be a reality of man's sinful existence. While it was not the penalty for Adam's sin it was a result of it. The unsanctified person possesses "the carnal mind," which is the personal service of sin and is represented in Scripture as the body of sin, the unrenewed nature, the "old man" and is to be "put off" by obeying God.⁴ As long as one lives in bondage to sin the law condemns him, but when one allows sin to be destroyed in his life he is "free to be married" to Christ.⁵ Essentially this means to stop actually sinning through the help of Christ. One who claims to be married to Christ but continues to disobey the law, i.e., allows sin to "reign" in his life, is a "spiritual adulterer."⁶

¹"What Is the Penalty of the Law?" p. 180.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Uriah Smith, "Our Old Man," RH 13:3 (December 9, 1853):20.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

Spiritual death is "a state of estrangement and alienation from God," in which man was placed in consequence of Adam's transgression.¹ Smith did not develop this concept into a doctrine of inherent depravity in the old Calvinistic sense. He means actual sin causes spiritual death. His definition of "total depravity," i.e., "our inability to render, unaided by Christ, acceptable obedience to God,"² reflects the moderate views of the New Haven definition of Nathaniel Taylor. He suggests no way (except possibly by imitation of Adam) that this "depravity" is inherited, and guilt is attached only to personal, actual sin.

The state of sin is really the actual sinning of the responsible sinner. While Smith sees such sins proceeding from "the carnal mind," which is hostile to the law of God, he is not concerned with how man's inheritance is transmitted *per se*. He is content to see mortality as the primary effect of the sin of Adam. Obedience to the law is possible and man is held responsible to give account.³ In short, "original sin" is an expression for the actual sin of Adam.⁴

¹Uriah Smith, "Perpetuity of the Moral Law," RH 13:26 (May 19, 1859):204.

²Uriah Smith, "Perpetuity of the Moral Law," RH 14:6 (June 30, 1859):45. Cf. "A Catechism for the Deist," RH 9:17 (February 26, 1857):129-130.

³Uriah Smith, "Synopsis of the Present Truth," RH 12:2 (May 27, 1858):12.

⁴Uriah Smith, "What Is the Penalty of the Law?" p. 180: "Inasmuch as all die for original sin, or on account of the sin of Adam, . . ." Later he was clearer in his article "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," RH 65:27 (July 3, 1888):424-425: "Christ's death had no reference whatever to Adam's original sin, in the way of paying the penalty therefore, or saving men from its effects." Emphasis supplied.

J. H. Waggoner

Another competent Adventist writer of the early days was J. H. Waggoner (1820-1889), who wrote three books during the first decade, and numerous periodical articles during his career as a minister.

Adam brought into the world a curse on the earth, through his sin, and the dominion of man was lost to his posterity and handed over to the new master, Satan.¹ However, for man, the most serious consequence of this was that "all, without any distinction of age or character, die in consequence of Adam's transgression."² In Christ all will be made alive, including the wicked (1 Cor 15:22), to stand the final sentence.³ This death is literal.

Waggoner understands the "sinful state of the world" to refer to the practice of rebelling against God, and he points out that the purpose of the law of God is to identify this condition.⁴

¹J. H. Waggoner, "The Kingdom of God," RH 8:20 (September 18, 1856):156.

²J. H. Waggoner, "Will the Wicked Have a Resurrection?" RH 9:14 (February 5, 1857):108.

³*Ibid.* This argument is presented as an answer to universalism.

⁴J. H. Waggoner, "The Law of God," RH 4:15 (October 18, 1853):114. Waggoner's article appeared as a series in the RH and was spread over a ten-month period: "The Law of God. An Examination of the Testimony in Both Testaments." RH 4:15, 18-20 (October 18, November 8, 15, 11, 1859):113-114, 137-138, 145-147, 153-156; RH 5:24, 25 (July 18, 25, 1854):185-187, 190-191, 193-196. *Ibid.*, p. 155: "God loved him even in his sinful state, and sent his Son to die in man's stead. The death of his Son was necessary, because his law was holy, just and good, and must be maintained. Would it not be reasonable to suppose, that, in the death of his Son, God desired rather to bring the transgressor back to obedience to his law, than to release him from further obligation to keep it? If the nature of the law remained unchanged, (as it must, being perfect, a rule of holiness, containing justifying principles,) then the transgression of it must still be wrong, or sinful, and of course still tending to condemnation; and if through the death of Christ we are released from the obligation to keep this holy law, then Christ becomes the minister of sin." The sinful state is the "state" of transgressing the law. And as long as one continues to lead

There is an element of covenant theology in his teaching suggesting that if Adam had kept the law he would have been saved by that action.¹ Man is in a "sinful condition" if he continues "in the service of sin,"² a state or condition depicted as being in "bondage under the elements of the world."³ Waggoner saw this state depicted in Eph 2:1-3: Men are "by nature the children of wrath." By "children of wrath," he understands Paul to mean children of disobedience or disobeying children.

Thus we see that to be in bondage under the elements of the world is being in a state of sin, which is compared to that of a child who is under tutors and governors; so we were under a school-master, under the law, which has been shown to be under condemnation.⁴

Waggoner also refers to Adam as man's "representative head,"⁵ but he does not develop this to the extent that Federal theologians had. He simply means, Adam is the father of mankind, and since his Fall man cannot keep the law without the aid of Christ.⁶

a life of sinful pursuit he is under the law's condemnation. In his book, The Law of God (Rochester: Advent Review Office, 1854), p. 82. Cf. J. H. Waggoner, "The Sabbath," RH 8:24 (October 16, 1856):185.

¹The Law of God, p. 59: "God gave a perfect law—obedience to it was man's whole duty, and he would have lived, had he done it. But he transgressed it, and was thereby brought under condemnation."

²"The Law of God," p. 156: "The law of God showed him his sinful condition. . . . when the commandment came, imparting the knowledge of, and thereby giving strength to, sin, he saw that he was a transgressor of the law, and stood condemned—under the law. He then died to the law with Christ. . . . and instead of continuing in the service of sin, the law of God became his delight." Waggoner concludes this segment of his seires by asserting that those who keep the commandments have the carnal removed.

³Ibid., p. 187.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.; cf. Waggoner, The Law of God, p. 92.

⁶"The Law of God," p. 185: "Now the law was ordained unto life, because it is a just standard of morals; but transgressors can obtain life only through Christ; and we understand this scripture to mean that the

Conversion to Christ takes away the "carnal mind," replaces it with a heart that is open to the development of moral character (which is accomplished by keeping the law through Christ's aid) and leads one on in that development.¹

The acknowledged definition of law, is a rule of action. Law, or rule, is necessary to the development of character. We can form no definite idea of the character of any man except by comparing his life with a rule of right—something that will determine right from wrong. Hence by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom. iii,20. And character is not only determined by a comparison with, but it is formed in view of the very existence of such rule or law; for sin is the transgression of the law. 11 John iii,4. And in the entire absence of such a rule there is no moral character apparent; for where no law is there is no transgression.²

The major Adventist writers of the first decade, i.e., the Whites, Uriah Smith, and J. H. Waggoner, were in essential agreement on virtually all points regarding the effects of Adam's sin on his posterity. All die as a penalty of Adam since they sinned in Adam. But all are born "depraved" (in the same sense as the New Haven theologians understood the term) as a result of Adam's sin. There is no discernible innovative work done on the doctrine inherited from John Taylor by way of George Storrs and his conditionalism. And an examination (in the next section) of the writings of less prominent Adventist writers reveals that the movement as a whole was united on these thoughts.

The Adventist Meaning of Related Terms

The Carnal Mind

The use of the expression "carnal mind" was common in the writers of the first decade. It would be profitable to this study to determine the

ultimate object or design of the law is accomplished in the person of Christ who takes away the carnal mind, bestows upon us a moral character, and brings to obedience." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 156.

¹*Ibid.*, p. 190.

²*Ibid.*, p. 113.

meaning of the phrase and the relationship it had in the minds of early Adventists with reference to Adam's Fall.

This Biblical expression "the carnal mind" [τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός —Rom 8:7] was used among the early Adventists to describe the result of refusing to fashion one's life after the law of God.¹

It is that part of our nature that is alienated from the Lord by wicked works, which, of itself, in other words, "is not subject to the law of God, neither can be." [Romans 8] Verse 7. All our affections that oppose the holiness of God, and run out after sin, constitute the carnal mind.²

J. N. Andrews shows the same understanding when he writes:

Do you say that God abolished his law, and then reenacted all of its precepts save the Sabbath Commandment? We answer that such an unwillingness on your part to submit to the law of God, shows that you possess "the carnal mind," which is "enmity against God," which "is not subject to the law of God, neither can be." Jesus has said that "not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled;" but you, to avoid the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, teach us that that commandment has been struck out of the law.³

These statements show a close connection between the "carnal mind" and the external acts of sin. Such a mind involves an attitude of the unconverted person that "dislikes restraint,"⁴ pleads for freedom from

¹For an early treatment of the term as used in Rom 7 and 8, see G. W. Holt, "Thoughts on Rom. vii, and viii,1-7," RH 2:7 (November 25, 1851):53.

²M. E. S., "Consecration No. 7—Sanctification," RH 14:24 (November 3, 1859):189. Emphasis supplied. No other name is given to this author, however EGW refers to "her" in Spiritual Gifts, 2:294.

³J. N. Andrews, "The Perpetuity of the Law of God," RH 1:5 (January 1851):35.

⁴J. N. Andrews, "Remarks of O. R. L. Crosier," RH 2:11 (February 2, 1852):82: "The wholesome restraint contained in the law of God would never have been deemed 'a yoke of bondage,' were it not for the carnal mind which dislikes the restraint."

God's decalogue,¹ is not subject to the law,² is hostile to God,³ and will not acknowledge God's rightful authority.⁴ It is able to keep the "letter of the law" but not the spirit, an accomplishment that is worthless to one's personal salvation.⁵

Furthermore, this carnal mind is seen as a power in the life. It needs "lashing"⁶ and "rooting out."⁷ It is comparable to "noxious weeds"

¹J. N. Andrews, "The Sabbath," RH 3:2 (May 27, 1852):11: "Such a freedom as that [from keeping the commandments], is really the freedom for which the carnal mind ever pleads."

²R. F. Cottrell, "Reply to E. Miller, Jr.," RH 5:2 (January 31, 1854):13: "Is this wisdom from above? Is it not rather from the carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

³C. Monroe, "Christian Perfection," RH 5:3 (February 7, 1854):21: "'Blessed are the pure in heart,' says Jesus, 'for they shall see God.' Matt. v,8. Such in the individual we speak of, we love and admire. Such is the one who has passed from death unto life. John v,24; 1 John iii,14. who has experienced the death of unholy tempers and the carnal mind? Being dead to sin he lives no longer therein. Rom. vi,2. It is no pleasure to him. He is no longer its slave." Cf. J. N. Andrews, "Watchman, What of the Night?" RH 3:2 (May 27, 1852):15.

⁴G. W. Holt, "The Covenant Made in Horeb," RH 2:9 (December 23, 1851):66: "The carnal mind is enmity against God. . . . the carnal mind is that which will not acknowledge the authority of the law of God."

⁵J. B. Frisbie, "The Commandments of God Not Abolished," RH 5:6 (February 28, 1854):45: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. Rom. viii,7. . . . The carnal mind may keep the letter of the law, but it requires a spiritual mind to serve in the spirit. Any man may keep the letter without keeping the spirit; but no man can keep the spirit of the law without keeping the letter. 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' 2 Cor. iii,6."

⁶J. W. Morton, "The Seventh day of the Week is the Only Weekly Sabbath of God's Appointment," RH 4:11 (November 29, 1853):163: "Know also, ye professor of the Christian religion who neglect the sanctification of the seventh day, and especially ye ministers of Jesus who 'teach men so,' that you make dark what God has made plain; that you pluck out the hand of God's schoolmaster one of those rods wherewith he would lash the carnal heart; that you hide one of God's candles under a bushel, and compass yourselves about with sparks, and as fire of your own kindling; that you provoke the Holy Spirit, in rejecting his testimony, and teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

⁷S. T. Belden, "Importance of Obedience," RH 4:16 (October 25,

and "old leaven" and keeps company with "unholy tempers," etc.¹ It captures the heart and wars against God's principles in the life.² It is itself a set of principles that reigns in the life.³

There is nothing more consistent than that God's law should remain, unchanged and unabolished, and that whatever he does is in accordance with this rule of right. When we consider this law of itself as being perfect, without fault, the weakness of human nature, and their liability and proneness to err and transgress it, is not taken into account. But when we consider man in his natural state, with opposite principles reigning within, which is called the "law of sin," (the carnal mind,) he is not able to perform perfect obedience, till these principles are rooted out. When this is done, he can say in the language of the Psalmist: "Oh how Love I thy law! it is the meditation all the day."⁴

Synonyms for the "carnal mind" include: "the natural man,"⁵ "the old man" of sin,⁶ and the "law of sin and death in the members."⁷ The early Adventists consistently depicted the "state" as an external condition caused in each individual by personal choices. Hence this condition could be "overcome," and though the carnal mind could not truly keep the law of God

1853):124-125: "We are not living under a dispensation which far surpasses the former in glory and perfection. Under this dispensation the way is provided for man to perform perfect obedience to the law of God, or in other words, it liberates him from the carnal mind, and places him in a condition where he can have strength to perform acceptable obedience to God through Jesus Christ."

¹C. Monroe, "Christian Perfection," p. 20.

²R. F. Cottrell, "Reply to E. Miller, Jr.," p. 13.

³S. T. Belden, "Importance of Obedience," p. 12.

⁴Ibid.

⁵James White, "The Faith of Jesus," RH 5:7 (March 7, 1854):54.

⁶Elias Goodwin, "How to Suffer with Christ," RH 4:215 (December 27, 1853):198. R. F. Cottrell, "E. R. Pinney's 'Three Sabbaths' Reviewed," RH 5:15 (May 2, 1854):115.

⁷Hiram Edson, "The Two Laws," RH 2:5 (October 7, 1851):37; R. F. Cottrell, "Reply to E. Miller, Jr.," p. 13; S. T. Belden, "The Importance of Obedience," p. 124; J. N. Andrews, "Perpetuity of the Royal Law," RH 6:3 (August 29, 1854):20-21.

by itself, conversion brought one to the point where he could and must overcome it and the heart's "evil propensities," through the aid of Christ.¹

One writer took this to its extreme conclusion but qualified her terms in such a way that the goals seemed attainable:

We can be perfect in purity (our love perfect, our motives perfect) but only, if you please, relatively so, until we come to perfect judgment; but since sin is not where there is no law, that sin which has been committed through an ignorance that was not willful, is not laid to our charge. It is the consent of an enlightened mind that constitutes sin to us. I believe we can be perfect as far as our knowledge goes, continually, i.e., keep the law perfectly as far as we understand it; till, when we come to a perfect understanding of it, our purity will be perfect absolutely.²

Here the believer is exhorted to be perfect; if he thinks that is an impossible imperative, he is to remember that God is "too wise to require of his followers a thing they could not perform."³ The practical solution to

¹J. N. Andrews, "Perpetuity of the Royal Law," pp. 20-21: "He [Paul] adds that the law is spiritual, but that he is carnal, sold under sin. His language depicts in the most striking manner the power of the carnal mind. Notwithstanding he approved the holiness and excellence of the law of God, he was carnal, sold under sin, and unable to render acceptable obedience to its precepts. The other law of sin in his member baffled all his efforts to keep the law of God. In despair he flies to Christ for refuge and help. He obtains forgiveness of his past transgression of the law of God, through faith in the great propitiation for sin; he is delivered from the carnal mind—that other law of sin in the members—and grace is given him, that he may hereafter render acceptable obedience to the holy, just and perfect law of God." Cf. J. W. Raymond, "Our Dialect," RH 8:24 (October 26, 1856):190; Waggoner, "The Law of God," p. 156.

²M. E. S., "Consecration," p. 190. Emphasis supplied. This view implies that sin is simply known, deliberate, external acts and is accompanied by a perfectionistic solution which itself requires interpretation. M.E.S. offers the interpretation: "How can one walk after the Spirit, while in possession of the carnal mind, whose law is sin, and which continually leads him into it? He cannot; he must first be free from the carnal mind. But the apostle writes (Rom. viii,2), 'The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath set me free from the law of sin and death.' And now, 'If Christ be in you, the body is death (mortal, verse 11), because of sin (original sin made it mortal); but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

³The employment of this well-known statement of Pelagius probably should not be given too much significance. The author was undoubtedly unaware of Pelagius' fondness for this logic.

the problem of keeping the law is presented as simple obedience. To illustrate her point the writer cites the experience of the tobacco user. As Scripture threatens that on judgment day God will declare all the filthy to remain filthy, the user of tobacco is admonished to "cleanse yourself from all filthiness."¹ The point is easily understandable: as with tobacco, so with sin—the Christian is to stop sinning. Such a course is achievable and expected.

This perfectionism is further expressed in an eschatological connection employed to remind the readers of the Review and Herald of their unique goal as Adventists:

We are trying to prepare for translation. Those gone before us had not this object in view. We expect soon to stand as mortals without a mediator. Shall we be triumphant then, with our carnal hearts within, while one sin would cause our fall?²

Here the serious concern regarding the nature of sin and the possibility of overcoming it is expressed: to be able to stand without an intercessor, i.e., "triumphant" prior to the actual parousia.³

It is fair to conclude that Adventist writers were relatively consistent with one another on the meaning of the expression, "carnal mind," and generally had little more in mind than the problem of death and the dying

¹Ibid., p. 190. Emphasis supplied.

²Ibid. M.E.S. does not intend to present this as a strict human moralism. She sets the goal within the arena of Christ's sanctifying work as she defines. God sanctifies one "blameless unto the coming of our Lord."

³This position could not hold to the radical view of sin in the Augustinian tradition which saw sin as total depravity rather than simple deprivation. It would rather presuppose a more mechanistic or external view of what is properly called sin. While M.E.S. states a perfectionistic approach to experiential sin, she should be considered more extreme in her drawing out of the implications of her position than most Adventist writers of the first decade. This extreme she expresses is not typical of the major writers, though it can be argued that they worked from the same general premises as she did.

nature when they wrote of "the sinful condition." That nature is weak and prone to "carnality," but sin is external, and as one cooperates with Christ he is aided to keep God's holy law. The old nature continues to endure until the coming of the Lord. The general Adventist meaning was summed up by James White:

There is no state of grace to which we may attain in this life where our old nature derived from Adam will expire; but every true believer in Jesus Christ is in a state where he does not serve sin; it has no dominion over him. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death, and while his faith continues in exercise, by which he is united to Christ, he has victory over all sin and does not commit sin. Tempted we always shall be; a war with nature we always shall have; but the victory, through the power of an indwelling Christ, is certain.¹

Man's Lostness

The lost condition of man is to be understood in the same way as the "state of sin," the "carnal mind," and the "sinful nature." Man is "lost" because of Adam and his rebellious act. But in the early Adventist presentations of lostness the subject was always offset by the promise of restoration, akin to the Rom 5:12-21 analogy. It was on the latter thought that the Advent believers focused: the importance of restoration and the reception of the "second Adam" and what he had to offer. This was typified in a four-part series by S. T. Belden in 1853,² in which he explained:

We may go back to our first parents and inquire what was lost by disobedience. They lost the favor of God, and a right to the tree of life: the earth was cursed, and man was driven from the beautiful garden where he had been placed, to labor under the curse, and till the ground for the support of his nature till he should return to the earth again. But praise the Lord, that there was left with him a ray of hope that the earth would not always remain in this deplorable condition. A promise was there given of

¹James White, "The Kingdom of God," p. 153. Emphasis supplied.

²S. T. Belden, "The Importance of Obedience," *RH* 4:14-17 (October 11, 18, 25, November 1, 1853):110-111, 118-119, 124-126, 133-134.

a second Adam in this sense, that as Adam was the first transgressor, so death passed on all his posterity. So Christ, the first, perfectly obedient, or righteous Person¹ should bring his own, those begotten by him to a lively hope, again to eternal life;² the earth again restored to its paradisaic state, and a way for fallen man to again have a right to the tree of life, and live in the sight of a holy God. See Rom. v, 12-21.³

Adventists viewed this lostness in a literal and material point of view, due largely to their conditionalist heritage. Man has lost his favor "because" he is a sinner, and therefore he will die.⁴ Only forgiveness for that sinning will restore his potential of future life.⁵

The Penalty as Death

It has been demonstrated that literal death was the penalty of Adam's sin in the writings of the major contributors to early Adventist thought. This position is consistently held throughout the less prominent Adventist writers of the first decade, including Cottrell, Arnold, Taft, Hull, Saunders, Cornell, and Goodrich.⁶

¹The typical Adventist definition of "righteousness" as right-doing.

²The "new birth" is apparently seen here as the resurrection.

³Ibid., p. 111.

⁴Cf. Luke Maxson, "The Bible," *RH* 14:26 (November 17, 1859):205: "The Bible reveals our lost condition by sin and transgression against the holy law of God, and also the great remedy provided in the gospel; that full and free salvation, redemption from sin, and redemption from death, through the death and sufferings and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is freely offered to all who will believe, accept and obey its teachings; and also the lost and deplorable condition of the sinner, the finally impenitent, who rejects the invitations of the gospel, and slights offered mercy and salvation; when the summer is past and gone, and the harvest is ended, and they are not saved." L. V. Masten ("Perversion of God's Word," *RH* 4:1 [May 26, 1853]:6), makes passing reference to "fallen man" and identifies them as those "who had always walked in direct disobedience to that [God's] law."

⁵See R. F. Cottrell, "Reply to E. Miller, Jr.," p. 77.

⁶R. F. Cottrell, The Bible Class Lessons upon the Law of God and the Faith of Jesus (Rochester: Advent Review Office, 1855), p. 63. David

Non-Adventist Sources

One of the features of the early Review and Herald was the selection of various non-Adventist contemporaries who added credibiity and support to what the Advent movement was saying. In sharing these sources there was a degree of risk involved relative to the pioneers' attempt to construct a consistent "present truth." And to what extent these sources may have affected actual doctrine in the belief structure of Adventist readers is probably indeterminable. However, the church paper was considered important for the Adventist tradition that was fast developing. These selected materials help to show what the Adventists perceived as Biblically sound and thus add a degree of objectivity and clarification of what SDAs meant by their terminology.

1. An article reprinted from The Toronto Christian Observer described what man incurred as a result of Adam's Fall: divine displeasure,

Arnold, "Rapology Explained," RH 4:5 (July 21, 1853):34-37. S. A. Taft, "Communication from Eld. S. A. Taft," RH 12:19 (September 30, 1858):145-146. Moses Hull, "The Destiny of the Wicked," RH 13:3 (December 9, 1858):17. E. B. Saunders, "What Must I Do to Be Saved?" RH 13:6 (December 30, 1858):41-42; "The Way of Life," RH 15:5 (December 22, 1859):33-34. M. E. Cornell, "Philosophy vs. Bible Truth," RH 13:20 (April 7, 1859):153: "It is said the death spoken of is a 'spiritual death.' To this we reply that spiritual death is a state of sin which is the crime and not the penalty. God does not pronounce the crime as the penalty of itself, saying to the wicked man, because you have become a sinner, I pronounce you in a state of sin. No no. But 'the soul that sinneth, (is in a state of sin or spiritually dead) it shall die.' 'Shall die' in the text is the penalty of sin or spiritual death, but those already dead spiritually cannot afterwards die spiritually, except they first be resurrected from that death, which the wicked have no promise of, and hence the death threatened the sinner is literal death or extinction of life." E. Goodrich, "Language Confounded," RH 14:14 (August 25, 1859):105-106. "The death threatened Adam, as that is to be executed upon the finally impenitent, can form no exception to the above rules, even if it be replied that the penalty of God's law is spiritual or moral death. In the first place we have no such forms of expression; no such death threatened in the Bible. Secondly, we have no record of any such death that has been or is to be rendered in the form of judgment against men. And thirdly, we cannot find where anybody has been or is to be executed with moral death. . . . When death reigns, neither action, sensation, pain or consciousness can exist; because life is gone.

the curse of the earth, pain, toil, sorrow, and death as a return to dust.¹

2. The London Quarterly Journal of Prophecy chronicled man's inability to progress in anything but evil as the result of "Adam's doings": the heart is wicked, thorns and thistles are "memorials of the primal sin," diseases, powerlessness, and death all typify man.²

3. The Christian Review described the earth as "the innocent participator in the punishment of another" and looked to the day when it would be liberated from its "guilty author." Curiously, this article referred to part of the curse as "death, temporal and spiritual."⁴

4. A "Selection," with no source given, entitled "Brief Thoughts" emphasized the same argument on death and sin as Storrs had used, and presented the usual Adventist interpretation of 1 Cor 15:22, i.e., in Adam all die, but through Christ all will be resurrected to face final judgment—some to life, others to die the second death.⁵

5. A series of eleven articles entitled, "On Keeping the Heart," by John Flavel (d.1691), the English Puritan and Non-conformist divine, was featured in 1855, 1856.⁶ Flavel presented the heart as the source of all "vital

¹"The New Heavens and the New Earth," RH 4:25 (December 27, 1853):198-199.

²"The Present Age," RH 5:6 (February 28, 1854):41-43.

³"Renovation of the Earth," RH 5:19 (May 30, 1854):149-150.

⁴Ibid., p. 150: "Christ was revealed that he might destroy the works of the devil. One of these works was the subjugation of the natural world to natural, as a faint type of moral evil. The curse, which was laid upon the earth, was as much a result of the malignant efforts of the great adversary as the death, temporal and spiritual, inflicted on Adam and his posterity."

⁵"Brief Thoughts on the Nature of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Final Destiny of Man," RH 7:26 (March 27, 1856):202-203.

⁶John Flavel, "On Keeping the Heart," RH 8:22-24 (October 2, 9, 16, 1856):169-170, 177-178, 186-187), 9:1-9 (November 6, 13, 20, 27,

operations," both good and evil, and the determinator of right and wrong behavior.¹ Through apostasy (self-seeking) man has become "disordered and rebellious," "irregular" in all his actions. But regeneration changes this so that "the soul which sin had universally depraved, is by grace restored."² Thus, by "keeping the heart," Flavel means preserving it from sinning, a practice that would disorder it again.³ While he speaks of "depravity and corruption," it is in the sense of actual sin,⁴ and he insists that the "evil propensities" of man can be overcome by mortifying and subduing them.⁵

In another article, Flavel maintains that man is not partially "but entirely depraved," and that it is at regeneration that holiness begins, that it is not enough for one simply to improve on one's character, rather man must be regenerated in heart so that good works can flow forth.⁶

6. A Guide to Perfection is the source for an article on "The Perfect Christian."⁷ In brief, the argument separates bodily imperfections from sin. A perfect Christian is defined as "one saved from all sin, and whose heart is filled with the love of God," though no specific method is given other than stopping sinning.⁸ God, angels, and Adam (in his innocency)

December 4, 11, 18, 25, 1856, January 1, 1857):1-2, 9-10, 17-18, 23-25, 33-34, 41-42, 49, 57, 65-66.

¹Ibid., p. 169. He speaks of this as "indwelling sin." Ibid., p. 33.

²Ibid., pp. 169-170.

³Ibid., p. 170.

⁴Ibid., p. 41.

⁵Ibid., p. 49.

⁶John Flavel, "The Nature and Forms of Self-Deception," RH 12:16 (September 2, 1858):121-122.

⁷"The Perfect Christian," RH 12:4 (June 10, 1858):26-27.

⁸Ibid., p. 26: "God is perfect; a pattern of perfection to all his people. There can be no sin in his infinite nature—nothing but purity, goodness and love. So we are commanded to be free from sin, and to be filled with the Divine Spirit; and to show the truth of this the Apostle says (Rom. viii,2,) 'And the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made

are representatives of the state which is now unattainable by sinful man except in one area, that is, sinlessness.¹ One cannot be perfect as they are perfect except with regard to sin.²

This side of glorification man is always "subject to disease and pain" and must end up in the grave. Man "will always be liable to err in judgment, and this may lead to unintentional errors in practice."³ But these errors are not to be regarded as properly called sin, they are rather the results of sin.⁴ While sinlessness is expected of the perfect Christian, even in a body racked with infirmities, that sinlessness is understood to mean the absence of actual sin.⁵

us free from the law of sin and death.' To be a perfect Christian, then, is nothing more than to be saved from all sin, and to love God with all the heart, soul, might and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves."

¹Ibid., p. 27: "God is perfect in a sense in which no other being can be. Angels have a perfection peculiar to themselves. They are perfect angels. Adam had a perfection peculiar to his state as a sinless being. When he fell he not only became polluted by sin, but all the powers of his soul became greatly debilitated. From this state of debilitation he cannot be restored in this world."

²Ibid., pp. 26-27. "Therefore to be a perfect Christian, does not mean that in every sense we must be as perfect as God, as angels, or as Adam was before the fall. . . . When we speak of a perfect Christian we do not mean one that is as perfect as God, as angels, or as Adam was in his state of innocency, but we simply mean one who is free from all sin—as free as God, angels, or Adam before his apostasy—one whose heart is filled with love to God and man."

³Ibid., p. 27.

⁴Ibid., p. 27: "These errors and infirmities are not sins. They are inseparable with man's fallen state; and unless they spring from disobedience to the will of God, may be considered innocent, and for which he is not held responsible. Therefore, since we claim not Adamic perfection for man in his present state, he may be subject to many of the evils and infirmities of life which are necessary results of the fall, and from which God never designed to restore man fully in this world, and still be a perfect Christian; that is, saved from all sin and filled with the Divine Spirit."

⁵The author insists that the reader understand how he is defining sin so he knows what to expect of his perfection. "He who expects Adamic or angelic perfection, in every respect, from man in his present state, has

7. The State of the Dead, by John Milton (1608-1674), found popularity among Adventists of the first decade. Three chapters from this work appear in 1858 in the Review and Herald and are largely given over to the argumentation favoring conditionalism.¹

In Chapter 1, Milton argues for a wholistic view of man by way of traducianism on both Biblical and traditional grounds. Pre-existence and creationism are dismissed as unscriptural and illogical options. They neither square with the Biblical depiction of creation nor do they do justice to a Biblical view of God's integrity, claims Milton. Furthermore, such theologians as Tertullian, Apollinarius, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory of Nyssa would agree with such a conclusion on the basis of what they wrote in their day.

Milton maintains that Scripture presents a wholistic view of man by virtue of the creation account itself. Scripture has a built-in logic to it: the fact that the descendants of Adam were "in his loins" is both Scriptural and logical; the justice of God is also to be considered logical. If the creationist theory of the soul is true, how can God remain free of charges of injustice when (given the creationist rationale) he continues to create souls that are impaired.³

Milton then appeals to three presuppositions which to him show the illogical stance of the old theology.

1. The argument from the natural transmission of sin:

widely mistaken the subject, and stands in great need of being instructed from the scriptures of truth. And he stands equally in need of being thus instructed, who supposes that because man cannot be saved from all the infirmities of his nature in this world, he must necessarily live in sin, and perpetually transgress the law of God." Ibid.

¹John Milton, "The State of the Dead," RH 12:25-26 (November 11, 18, 1858):193-194, 201-203.

²Ibid., p. 193.

³Ibid., p. 194.

If sin be communicated by generation, and transmitted from father to son, it follows that what is the original subject of sin, namely, the rational soul, must be propagated in the same manner; for that it is from the soul, that all sin in the first instance proceeds, will not be denied.¹

2. The argument from the imputation of Adam's sin:

On what principle of justice can sin be imputed through Adam to that soul, which was never either in Adam, or derived from Adam? In confirmation of which Aristotle's argument may be added, the truth of which is, in my opinion, indisputable. If the soul be equally diffused through any given whole, and throughout every part of that whole, how can the human seed, the noblest and most intimate part of all the body, be imagined destitute of the soul of the parents, or at least of the father, when communicated to the son by the laws of generation.²

3. The argument based in part on the scriptural theory of the new birth. Here Milton cited Scripture (Heb 12:9) to demonstrate the meaning of the phrases "fathers of the flesh" and "father of the spirit." He argues that these should be taken theologically rather than literally and climaxes his argument:

"The father of spirits," is either the heavenly father, who in the beginning created all spirits, angels as well as the human race, or the spiritual father, who bestows a second birth on the faithful; according to John iii,6. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The argument, too, will proceed better, if the whole be understood as referring to edification and correction, not to generation.^{3,4}

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴The fact that the Review and Herald editors would print Milton's article which uses three arguments that go beyond the usual Adventist treatment may indicate (1) that conditionalism was far more important an issue to them than the theories surrounding original sin; (2) original sin was not really an issue in their thinking at this point; and (3) they simply did not recognize or perceive the issue to be as crucial at this point, i.e., they had no real reason to examine the issue. At a time when Smith had presented the new birth as the resurrection, it is interesting that Milton's argument in favor of a spiritual view would be permissible. At any rate, the editors deemed Milton's work a significant aid in adding credibility to the conditionalist position which they felt commissioned to propagate.

Summary

The first decade saw the Adventist pioneers set forth a literalistic interpretation of Rom 5:12 and 1 Cor 15:22 where death was the primary undesirable state introduced to the human race by its common head. The notion of inherited guilt is altogether absent and consciously rejected. While the plan of salvation has to deal with the restoration of man's nature (now fallen, carnal, and hostile to God) to its original cooperative and teachable state, it is an operation of individual concern and deals primarily with external or personal actual sin. The corporate penalty for Adam's sin is death, not spiritual or eternal, but physical, temporal, literal death.

In short, the Adventists of the first decade present a remarkable consistency among themselves. They are in the tradition of New England, particularly that of the New Haven hamartiology of Nathaniel Taylor and the anthropological conditionalism of John Taylor. Their view of Rom 5:12 was a vital part of their landmark doctrine which saw man as a unit. Whatever man receives from Adam it is obtained by natural inheritance or a form of traducianism.

While soteriology was important in that Rom 5:12-21 emphasized God's answer to man's problem of death, the major concern was present in dominant anthropological terminology regarding original sin. This can be seen even in Smith's view of the new birth, which was never accepted generally by the church. He saw "spirit" as a physical notion.

In a final chapter and epilogue this investigation explores the subsequent forty years for adaptations, changes, or reiterations that may have occurred along with implications for better understanding some expressions used in Ellen White's writings—particularly concerning the nature of Christ and perfection.

CHAPTER V

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ADVENTIST POSITION ON ORIGINAL SIN

So far this study has described the historical roots of Seventh-day Adventism. It is clear that anthropological conditionalism was the primary vehicle through which a view of sin similar to that of the New Haven school became a part of the fundamental doctrinal structure of early Adventism. It now remains to be seen how this emphasis was integrated into SDA soteriology.¹

To aid in this final task, the standard of comparison formulated by N. P. Williams is employed.² However, rather than approach this study by personalities as Williams did (and as the previous chapters in this dissertation have), this chapter presents a synthesis of the common views of Adventist

¹Hamartiology is as concerned with soteriology as with anthropology, and any theology that purports to be Biblical truth must establish and maintain comprehensive interrelationships of thought.

²Williams' work, Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin, consists of eight lectures of a historical and critical nature, presented originally at the Brampton Lectures at the University of Oxford in 1924. At the time Williams was Chaplain of Exeter College in Oxford. His book appeared in print in 1927 and traces the development of the doctrine of original sin through major figures in western and eastern traditions. Williams analyzes each figure by tracing five issues through his theological writings: (1) The treatment of the Adam-story as historical truth or allegory; (2) the treatment of the original condition of man—unfallen, non-moral innocence, original righteousness; (3) the treatment of the undesirable state or quality that was theoretically communicated by Adam to his descendants; (4) the communication of this undesirable state or quality—the means by which it is passed on; and (5) the present state of human nature as a result and its implications for God's salvific work or man's response. (See *ibid.*, pp. xvi, 165ff., and above in this study, page 53, for the questions Williams asks).

Adventist writers and will notes specific personalities as they are typical or atypical of the Adventist expressions.

The Adventist View of Creation and Fall

From the beginning of their movement SDAs placed strong emphasis on time and history. Perhaps the greatest initial event in their history, the Great Disappointment of 1844, was connected to time. Prophecy was viewed as continuously unfolding in time. Specific prophecies emphasized the nearness of time of the Parousia. The Sabbath was a spot in time which had contemporary significance. The seven days of creation were literal time. Andrews even speculated that from the creation of Adam to the end of the Millennium (another time period) would be approximately 7,000 years.¹

This emphasis on time was rooted in a historico-literal view of Scripture. Ussher's chronology provided dates in the margin of the King James Version and formed the backbone of Adventist time standards. This emphasis on literalism is descriptive of most aspects of Adventist theology and world-view. Characteristically Adventist writers took a literal view of Adam and Eve as well.

SDAs accepted the older western Christian tradition with regard to the historicity of the creation and the Fall and essentially viewed the Biblical accounts uncritically. There was no hint in SDA thought that Adam and Eve should be taken merely as symbols of man's beginning or lapse in fidelity. That the race proceeded from a single human pair, as the Bible said, was the strict and consistent view of all the Adventist pioneers of this period, as this section demonstrates.

In the first issue of the Review and Herald, editor James White

¹J. N. Andrews, The History of the Sabbath, 3d ed. rev. (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1887), p. 9.

presented the literal Adam in the setting of the Sabbath doctrine. Sabbath was a gift given to Adam and his descendents by God himself.¹ This position presupposed seven literal days of creation and an unbrokenness of time from Adam to the present, and consciously tied SDA Weltanschauung to time. In a second article White moved from an understanding that the Sabbath was commemorative of the rest of God following his literal creating of the world.²

Adventist insistence on the relationship of the Sabbath to a literal creation week played a major role in preventing the Fall-story from becoming perceived as myth or symbol. However, at this time the modernist movement³ was not the threat to American conservative Christianity that it would later become. Darwin was to present his Origin of Species nine years after the first issue of James White's periodical appeared, and American theology was still primarily monogenistic at the time.⁴

¹James White, "When Was the Sabbath Instituted?" RH 1:1 (November 1850):1: "Now, if any part of this narrative is to be construed literally, the whole of it must be; and if we may not venture to deny or explain away the account which Moses has given of the creation, then we may not deny or explain away this unequivocal statement respecting the original institution of the Sabbath in Paradise. . . . the Sabbath was instituted at the close of creation, and handed down by tradition to all the descendents of Adam."

²James White, "What Day of the Week Do the Scriptures Designate as the Sabbath?" RH 1:1 (November 1850):1-2. White wrote that "it is plainly recorded that the Creator, after laboring the first six days, in which he completed the work of creation, rested the following day, which was the seventh in the order of creation" (p. 1). The remainder of the article bases the argument in that foundational fact.

³The term "modernist" is used here in its broad sense to refer to the attempts of theology to harmonize Christianity with modern critical thought. Ramm suggests "religious liberalism" or "neo-Protestantism" as perhaps better terms. In the tradition of Schleiermacher this movement presented a combination of German philosophical idealism, trust in Biblical criticism, priority of science over much of Scripture, and syncretizing of Christianity to new thought. Baker's Dictionary of Theology, s.v. "Liberalism," by Bernard Ramm.

⁴This is not to suggest that such views were restricted to or original with modern times. Christian allegorism had been a philosophical

The modernist movement challenged the historical character of the Fall-story of Genesis. Historical and source criticism, modern philosophy, liberal schools of religious thought, the natural sciences, the theory of evolution, and the simple difficulties inherent in the classical doctrine of original sin itself coalesced to erode the historical credibility of Gen 1-11.¹

For the SDA pioneers Genesis was a collection of short biographies of real people.² Adam and Eve were literal, historical figures.³ They were the type of perfect man, not in the mythical sense, but in the sense of what God intended for every man and woman to be.

preference of certain elements in the early Eastern church, e.g., Clement, Origen. In New England there were those who denied the need for a strict historicity of Adam and Eve, e.g., Horace Bushnell. See Smith, Changing Conceptions, p. 150ff. But the movement in America had not gained the momentum that it would later in the century, as American theologians were trained in the German schools of theology. See *Ibid.*, pp. 166ff.

¹See James L. Connor, "Original Sin: Contemporary Approaches," pp. 215-219, for a synopsis on how these elements contributed to this challenge.

²Uriah Smith, "How Long Shall You Live?" RH 18:9 (July 30, 1861):68. Smith presents Adam as a historical figure interacting with God on a personal basis and understands the book of Genesis to be a biography written by Moses.

³In his significant article, "The Death of Adam," RH 40:22 (November 12, 1872):172, Smith writes, "In Adam we have an account of the origin of the human family, at once so simple and consistent that the jeers of skepticism fall harmless at its feet, and science, in comparison, only makes itself ridiculous, in trying to account for it in any other manner." Smith demonstrates the threat that modernism is making by 1872, and in the face of that threat he firmly states his literalistic position on the historicity of Adam. Cf. similar assertions, Uriah Smith, Man's Nature and Destiny, 3d. ed. rev. (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1884), pp. 244-260; Uriah Smith, "The Abounding Grace," RH 74:22 (June 1, 1897):344; J. H. Waggoner, From Eden to Eden (Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1888), p. 15; James White, "Redemption," ST 1:1 (June 11, 1874):12; C. W. Stone, "Sin Is Too Expensive," RH 49:11 (March 15, 1877):84. Later EGW wrote [1890]: "Here [in Gen 1-3] is clearly set forth the origin of the human race; and the divine record is so plainly stated that there is no occasion for erroneous conclusions." Patriarchs and Prophets (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1913), p. 44.

The Lord made man upright in the beginning. He was created with a perfectly balanced mind, the size and strength of all its organs being perfectly developed. Adam was a perfect type of man. Every quality of mind was well proportioned, each having a distinctive office, and yet all dependent one upon another for the full and proper use of any one of them. Adam and Eve were permitted to eat of all the trees in the garden, save one. . . . Eve was beguiled by the serpent to believe that God would not do as He said He would. . . . Adam permitted himself to be seduced by the experience of his wife.¹

This 1872 statement of Ellen G. White is representative of the Adventist expressions in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Genesis account was assumed to be literal and was defended as such. Adam, Eve, paradise, the trees, the serpent, etc.—they were all real.²

SDA writers not only took the story as literal narrative but demonstrated a consistent consensus of agreement in their elaborations on details of the story as well. Paradise was the literal home of the original pair.³ When man and woman were finally driven out literally,⁴ the Garden of

¹Ellen G. White, Testimonies [1872], 3:72.

²A striking example of this literalism can be seen in the 1860 reply of Uriah Smith to a letter from J. F. Ballenger who had requested answers to a five-point objection against the literal view of Genesis as set forth by a Rev. Dr. Bagley in the New Church Herald. The objections, together with Smith's answers, demonstrate both the trends of the time and the SDA unwillingness to accommodate them. See Uriah Smith, "The Fall of Man," RH 16:20 (October 2, 1860):156.

³Andrews describes the Paradise of Eden as "the blissful abode of our first parents" "The Order of Events in the Judgment," RH 35:11 (March 1, 1870):84-85. EGW presents a description of the communication and environment of the first pair. She refers to Eden as the "most favorable circumstances." "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:9 (August 18, 1874):67.

⁴A. Lanphear, "Eternal Life," RH 15:17 (March 15, 1860): 129-130. Lanphear's statement is representative of Adventist expressions throughout the period: "We cannot have eternal life here, for when man transgressed, God drove him out of paradise and placed a flaming sword to guard the tree of life, lest he should partake and live forever. Here we behold the wondrous goodness of God. If Adam had been permitted to partake of the tree of life after he had transgressed, he would no doubt with all his posterity, have been immortal and lived forever in the same condition that was brought upon him by the fall." Cf. J. N. Andrews, "History of the Sabbath," RH 19:2 (December 10, 1861):9-10; Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts,

Eden was removed from this earth by God and taken to heaven¹ where it will remain until the restored new earth.² Man's dominion or rulership over the earth was lost.³

In the midst of the garden was the literal tree of life. It was located near the tree of knowledge of good and evil³ and provided the "antidote" to the latter's "poison."⁴ The Adventist treatment of this tree was

3:88. Though this exclusion was in fact from the Garden it is apparent that the tree of life was the important element that was lost. Rogers wrote, "Man is now driven from the garden to suffer the sentence pronounced upon him, that he might not eat longer of the 'tree of life' and become an immortal sinner." G. H. Rogers, "Does the Gospel Abrogate the Ten Commandments?" RH 60:34 (August 21, 1883):532. See also J. N. Andrews, "The Life Promised to the Righteous," RH 43:9 (February 10, 1874):68, Emily L. Canright, "Faith and Works," RH 36:5 (July 19, 1870):38. The fullest comprehensive description is given by EGW in Patriarchs and Prophets [1890] in her chapter on the temptation and Fall of Adam and Eve, pp. 58-62.

¹Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts, 3:83-88. Cf. Uriah Smith, "The Tree of Life," RH 15:18 (March 22, 1860):140. Smith says the tree was taken to the third heaven from where it came. Bell claimed that the tree now flourishes in heaven and only those who enter there will eat of it. "Bible Lesons for Youth—Lesson 11," RH 51:25 (June 20, 1878):195. This view was built on the internal evidence of Rev 21-22.

²See Waggoner, From Eden to Eden, pp. 238-254, for a full description of the restoration of the first dominion that was lost through Adam. The city of New Jerusalem contains the tree of life "which was once planted on the earth, but taken away because of the sin of Adam, and is to be restored to its place on the earth by the merits of the blood of the second Adam" (ibid., p. 247).

³James White referred to Adam as "lord of Eden." "Our Faith and Hope," RH 34:24 (December 7, 1869):185-186. Ellen White used similar descriptions: "the rightful sovereign," "the monarch of the world." See "Redemption—No. 1," RH 43:11 (February 24, 1874):82-83. Cf. James White, "The Way of Life from Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained," ST 3:6 (February 1, 1877):42-43; James White, "The New Earth," RH 49:12 (March 22, 1877):92-93; and C. C. L., "The Inheritance of the Saints," RH 62:9 (March 3, 1885):134.

⁴Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts, 3:35. B. M. Adams uses this expression ("Immortality of the Soul," RH 15:8 [January 12, 1860]:61-62). "Man to this day, prefers to evil knowledge that the old serpent beguiled our first mother to believe and receive, 'Ye shall not surely die,' in preference to the forewarned information of his Creator, that death would issue from the 'tree of knowledge of good and evil,' to whose poison and

occasionally figurative in nature; however, such treatment was more typological than mythological for it consistently maintained its hermeneutical base in the historical, Edenic tree.¹ While Ellen G. White spoke of its fruit as an "antidote to death,"² she maintained that its counterpart, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was not literally poisonous.³

D. M. Canright defined the Adventist view of immortality as access to the tree of life, i.e., immortality was something that could be "put on" or "taken off" as one related to the tree of life itself. Here he stressed the neutrality doctrine, or middle nature theory.

Our idea of the nature of immortality is this: It is a right, or an access, to the tree of life. . . . As long as Adam could have access to the tree of life he would live, but no longer. If he had never sinned, he would always have had access to the tree of life and

life-destroying banefulness there was—and can be only one antidote—the tree of life; and man was expelled from the garden to prevent his living forever through eating of the latter." Such a term is a figure of speech and not meant literally to refer to an organic substance. It is, however, interesting that SDAs treated the tree of life as having life-giving properties. A. Smith even suggested that the pollen from the tree of life "perhaps imparted enduring vigor to vegetation." See A. Smith, "Paradise Lost and Restored," RH 60:25 (June 19, 1883):388.

¹For example, she wrote of the fruit and leaves of the tree of life as representing Christ, the Scriptures, the Word of God, and the promises of God. See her following materials: "The Christian Warfare," p. 49; Manuscript 112, 1898 (reprinted in Nichol, ed., SDA Bible Commentary, 5:1135; Letter 3, 1898, Manuscript 71, 1898, Manuscript 95, 1898, Manuscript 67, 1898, Manuscript 67, 1898 (all reprinted in Nichol, ed., SDA Bible Commentary, 1:1086).

²Manuscript 41, 1902, reprinted in Medical Ministry (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1963), p. 233: "The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and immortality." Compare Ellen G. White, The Ministry of Healing (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1905), pp. 66, 122.

³Education (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1903), p. 25: "There was nothing poisonous in the fruit itself, and the sin was not merely in yielding to appetite. It was distrust of God's goodness, disbelief of His word, and rejection of His authority, that made our first parents transgressors, and that brought into the world a knowledge of evil."

would have lived forever. Then certainly he would have had immortality. Thus we see that immortality is simply a right, or an access to the tree of life.¹

D. P. Hall had set forth the view that Adam and Eve had never eaten of the tree of life at all,² but this suggestion was generally ignored in favor of the notion that originally Adam and Eve had partaken of it but had been removed from it.³ For Ellen White this explained why early man lived so long.⁴

Ellen White took the description of the Genesis Fall so literally that she often analyzed the thought processes and activities of the first pair.⁵

Adam is perceived as the literal head, or the representative, of the

¹D. M. Canright, "What Is Immortality?" RH 25:19 (April 11, 1865):148-150.

²D. P. Hall, "The Mortality of Man," p. 19 (see above, p. 239, n. 4).

³Lanphear, "Eternal Life," pp. 129-130; EGW, Spiritual Gifts, 3:64; D. M. Canright, "The Two Laws," ST 1:26 (May 6, 1875):202-203; D. M. Canright, "The Scripture Doctrine of a Future Life—No. 2," ST 5:4 (January 23, 1879):25-27; W. H. Littlejohn, "The Tree of Life," RH 60:36 (September 4, 1883):510-511. Uriah Smith wrote in 1896, "Before he fell, Adam had free access to the tree of life, and it would have been very strange if he had not eaten of it during the time while he maintained his innocence. But once eating of it would not insure eternal life. Continual access to it, and repeatedly eating of its fruits, would be necessary." "In the Question Chair," RH 73:29 (July 21, 1896):457. Cf. A. Smith, "Brief Comments on Bible Subjects," RH 64:19 (May 10, 1887):291.

⁴Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 90. Cf. "The Christian Warfare," p. 49.

⁵For example: (1) It was man's love for woman that led him to join her in rebellion (Spiritual Gifts, 3:42; "The Temptation of Christ," RH 45:14 [April 1, 1875]:107); (2) at the time of the Fall Adam was thought to have viewed eating the fruit as a "small matter" (Steps to Christ [Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1892], p. 33; "Redemption,—No. 1," RH 43:11 [February 24, 1874]:82-83); (3) the Fall was sometimes contrasted with subsequent falls of man ("Temptation of Christ," RH 45:10 [March 4, 1874]:74); and (4) Satan was presented as actively involved in the Fall—long accounts are given in EGW's writings regarding Satan's involvement with man's Fall—see for examples: Spiritual Gifts, 1:20-22; *ibid.*, 3:36-37; Spirit of Prophecy, 1:24-44; *ibid.*, 2:9ff, 85ff; *ibid.*, 4:324-330; Early Writings, pp. 147-152; Great Controversy, pp. v-xii, 531ff., 644ff.; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 44-89; Desire of Ages, pp. 114-131, 758-764).

human family and the context always supports a tight literal view.¹ Even the term "Federal head" is occasionally used, though in a non-technical sense.² The immediate effects of Adam's sins, based primarily on the details of Genesis, were often repeated in church literature.³

But Adventist writers also emphasized the transcendent spiritual truth of the Fall in contrast to the simple detailing of the account. This is seen in their presentations of the Christological typology to be found in Genesis. Adam was a type of Christ in that

he stands forth in his innocence and uprightness, untainted with sin, unafflicted with evil, and with unrestricted access to the tree of life. He needs nothing more but to remain in perfect obedience, until the period of his probation, whatever that may be, is accomplished, and his happy state thus becomes unalterably fixed.⁴

¹L. Maxon called Adam the "head of the stream" in that sin, and death by sin entered through him ("Death, What Is It?" RH 15:18 [March 22, 1860]:138-139). J. N. Andrews argued that the Sabbath is for the whole human family, not just the Jew, because God gave it to Adam, "the head of the human family" ("Institution of the Sabbath," RH 16:1-2 [May 29, 1860]:10-12). Henry E. Carver attributed the natural death of the human race to "our father Adam" ("The Death Incurred by Sin," RH 23:12 [February 16, 1864]:94). Albert Stone called Adam the "representative" of the race ["The Wages of Sin," RH 31:4 (January 7, 1868):49-50]. D. M. Canright used both terms "head" and "representative" and insisted that in giving the Sabbath to man's head and representative God had surely given it to all the race ("Objections to the Sabbath Answered," RH 42:3 [July 1, 1873]:17-18). Many more such references could be cited, but these are representative. In each case Adam is the literal head and representative of the human race—the latter because of the former.

²The term "federal head" is used to mean simple representative or natural head. For example, J. M. Aldrick, "Review of A. N. Seymour" (RH 20:1 (June 3, 1862):2, writes: "Adam is the federal head of the whole human family; therefore, if the Sabbath was made for Adam, all nations, whether Jew or Gentile, may claim its blessings through him." Adam is, therefore, the race unindividualized. Albert Stone argued that since Adam was the "federal head" life must originally have come to man through him and thus it is that death can come through him originally. "Thou Shalt Surely die," RH 22:34 (November 10, 1863):190. Cf. for similar uses: N. Wardner, "Death," RH 55:19 (May 6, 1880):290-292; Uriah Smith, "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," RH 65:27 (July 3, 1888):424-425.

³See for example, D. M. Canright, "The Object of Creation," RH 39:19 (April 23, 1872):145-146.

⁴Uriah Smith, "Was Adam a Type?" RH 31:8 (February 4, 1868):120.

What was literally lost in Adam will be literally restored in Christ.¹
 There is a modern form of recapitulationism which is often expressed in Adventist thought, especially in the writings of Ellen G. White.²

The great work of redemption could be carried out by the Redeemer only as He took the place of fallen man. Burdened with the sins of the world, He must pass over the path where Adam fell, and redeem his failure. When Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him, but he was surrounded with the glories of Eden. But it was not thus with Jesus; for, bearing the infirmities of degenerate humanity, He entered the wilderness to cope with the mighty foe, that He might lift man up from the lowest depths of his degradation.³

In our humanity, Christ was to redeem Adam's failure. . . . Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain.⁴

Christ was often contrasted to Adam and his Fall—he succeeded where Adam fell—in appetite, in dependence on God, etc.⁵ In a literal

Smith's argument was a polemic against those who would make the Sabbath a type of better things to come. He set forth the SDA view as being that no types existed before man's Fall, for such would be absurd. Adam would not have been a type had man not fallen. But when he fell he became a type of a second Adam who would also be representative of mankind in innocence. Hence Smith's very argument requires a real, historical Adam to preserve the Sabbath doctrine. Cf. Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 36:7 (August 2, 1870):53.

¹D. M. Canright, "The New Jerusalem," RH 41:3 (December 31, 1872):17.

²For a number of recapitulation statements see articles by Ellen G. White: "Christian Recreation," RH 35:24 (May 31, 1870):185-186; "Redemption,—No. 1," RH 43:11 (February 24, 1874):82-83; "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:7-8 (July 28, August 4, 1874):51, 58; "Temptation of Christ," RH 45:10 (March 4, 1875):74. Cf. A. T. Jones, "Be of Good Cheer," RH 73:7 (February 18, 1896):104-105.

³Ellen G. White, "Tempted in All Points Like as We Are," Bible Echo 7:22 (November 15, 1892):338.

⁴Desire of Ages, p. 117. Cf. D. G. Mallery (in Prophetic Times) The Future Dispensation, RH 22:16 (September 15, 1863):123; J. N. Loughborough, "The Kingdom," RH 29:1 (December 11, 1866):1-2.

⁵Spiritual Gifts, 4:149. Cf. Joseph Clarke, "Obedience," RH 60:30 (July 24, 1883):469.

sense Christ was the "second Adam" who went over the same ground as the first and succeeded.¹

The literal view of Adam and Eve was woven with other doctrines in such a way that the entire doctrinal fabric must not be torn. To adopt a posture that Adam was symbolic or mythical would be to rip that cloth. Examples include the Sabbath of antiquity.² Marriage was also tied to the literal garden story.³ The law found its ancient roots in Eden; in fact, the popular Adventist presentation of the later nineteenth century stressed the fact that Adam broke all ten commandments in his transgression.⁴

Thus the Advent movement, in its insistence on Scripture as the standard for theology, even to the exclusive use of Biblical expression, is theologically bound to the historicity of Genesis. For SDAs truth was a unit, and all doctrines were inseparably bound together. Hence to mitigate this view of Genesis, the literal creation and the literal Fall, would contribute to the dismantling of the truth unit.

¹Ellen G. White, "Redemption,—No. 1," p. 83: "The Temptation of Christ," pp. 51, 58. Cf. Ellen G. White, "The Second Adam," Bible Echo 4:2 (January 9, 1899):18.

²J. N. Andrews, "Institution of the Sabbath," p. 10. Cf. D. M. Canright, "Objections to the Sabbath Answered," p. 17.

³Ellen G. White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1956), p. 63.

⁴Uriah Smith shows that all the comamndments were present in Eden. Adam and Eve coveted, stole, bore false witness, committed spiritual adultery, killed themselves "and all their posterity," dishonored their parent (God), took God in vain, idolized each other, made Satan their god, and had been given the Sabbath. "The Ten Commandments in Eden," RH (December 4, 1883):760. Other SDA writers gave similar arguments. See James White, "White Robes," RH 42:10 (August 10, 1873):76; M. E. Kellogg, "Sin, the Law and the Sabbath," RH 74:24 (June 15, 1897):370; Ellen G. White, "Christ and the Law," RH 45:18 (April 29, 1875):138; G. I. Butler, "The Law in Adam's Day," RH 68:10 (March 10, 1891):153-154; and D. M. Canright, The Two Laws (Battle Creek: SDA Publishing Assn., 1882), pp. 6-7. Compare this approach with that of Augustine (see above, p. 117).

In short, Adventists never imply that Adam and Eve were anything but literal, historical figures. These pioneers would classify modern discussions of polygenism and evolutionism as variances from what they considered truth, and would term them "strange doctrine" or "wild theology," and would consider them a sign of the end.¹ Consequently, SDAs worked from the assumption that Adam and Eve were historical. Man's sinful state had significance because it was commenced by Adam. The Sabbath had meaning because it began in Eden as God's gift to original man. The very interdependencies of SDA thought required a historical creation and Fall.

In regard to the doctrine of original sin one can conclude that this presupposition would monitor any formulation of the doctrine. The Biblical language that would be required to express the doctrine, the historical facts that were recorded in Scriptures and accepted as literal events, both would contribute to the doctrine. These would shape the notion in the church's quest for a consistent view of man.

Man's Original Nature

The second consideration concerns the early Adventist view on original nature of man, especially with regard to his spiritual state. As shown in previous chapters of this study, Christian theologians have held various positions that pushed the Scriptural material into notions of mysticism and utopianism, presenting Adam's original state in exaggerated and idealistic

¹A. Smith, "Strange Doctrine," RH 64:2 (January 11, 1887):20. Smith reviews a sermon delivered at a Congregational Church in Grandville, Michigan, where the minister spoke about (among other things) the concept that "if man had not been created with a tendency to evil, he would not have sinned. I do not feel myself bound to accept the Bible theory of the origin of evil." He also asserted that the Garden of Eden was merely a symbol for the state of innocence and that the death of Christ was not necessary to man's salvation. Smith judges this "wild theology," "strange doctrine," and "deontology." He calls it another sign of the end.

terms. Adam was presented as possessing an "original righteousness" which implied a fully developed spiritual giant. Such views affect subsequent components in a wholistic theology, for what Adam was suggests what man lost and therefore helps to determine the conclusion.

Insisting as they did on the literalism of Adam and the creation account of the Bible, Adventists logically presented no challenge to the imago Dei notion of Gen 1-3. Their interpretation consisted of taking the material at face value. While there was the occasional expression of polemic concern, i.e., against the orthodox position that the imago Dei was inherent immortality (the charge was that such a view lacked Biblical support and logically led to universalism),¹ the bulk of Adventist writing in this period was generally a re-wording or simple exposition of the Biblical account.

The earlier expositions on this question emphasized the physical, the later stressed the moral and spiritual, as this investigation will show. One early, clear statement of this period was that of Ellen White:

And now God says to his Son, "Let us make man in our image." As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of noble hight [sic], and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white, nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble—perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful.²

¹See Uriah Smith, "The Image of God," RH 39:18 (April 16, 1872):140. Smith argued that orthodox theology could not clearly prove its case from Scripture that the Imago Dei really included intrinsic immortality. On the contrary, Scripture itself argued against that view. He cited Col 3:9-10 and Eph 4:24 as evidence. Canright argued that Universalism, an "unscriptural and unreasonable doctrine," grows out of the immortality view as a logical reaction to the horrible notion of eternal punishing as "endless-hell." See D. M. Canright, "The Scripture Doctrine of a Future Life—No. 1," ST 5:4 (January 16, 1879):19.

²Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts, 3:34.

This statement was reworked and appeared several times over the next four decades.¹ Ellen White and Uriah Smith clearly set a pattern adopted by SDAs in their early treatment of this subject by guardedly emphasizing certain qualities of physical likeness: Adam's stature, symmetry, beauty, perfect health, size, and strength. Man's "organs and faculties" were "equally developed, and harmoniously balanced." Adam and Eve had a "noble perfection of form" and could legitimately be called the "noblest of creative works."² In the wake of these expressions other writers offered nothing new but often repeated the lines.³

¹See The Spirit of Prophecy (1870), 1:24-25; Patriarchs and Prophets (1890), pp. 45-46. See further, Education (1903), pp. 15-16.

²Spiritual Gifts (1864), 3:34. "He was of noble hight [sic], and of beautiful symmetry." Ibid., 4:120: "Adam and Eve were noble in stature, and perfect in symmetry and beauty." Uriah Smith, "The Death of Adam," RH 40:22 (November 12, 1872): "This body was endowed with a high and perfect organization, . . . this noblest of creative works." EGW, "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:7 (July 28, 1874):51: "Noble perfection of form;" EGW, "Longevity, and Habits of Life," RH 58:24 (December 13, 1881):369: "Man came from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization, and beautiful in form."

³See J. N. Andrews, "The Entrance of Sin—Shall It Exist Forever?" RH 43:12 (March 3, 1874):92; Uriah Smith, "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," pp. 424-425. This state of physical perfection provided a ground for purity, peace, and perfect happiness for humanity (see James White, "Our Faith and Hope," RH 34:24 [December 7, 1869]:185-186). Smith described the Edenic state as the "joys of paradise" ("Times of Refreshing," RH 35:18 [April 19, 1870]:140). And yet these descriptions never developed into any generally speculative, superhuman, or idyllic view of either Adam or the garden such as that seen in Thomas Aquinas. Perhaps the closest Adventists got to speculating was in their common faith that Adam and Eve were originally clothed with a halo of glorious light from God rather than with artificial garments. Ellen White alluded to this in her 1864 statement: "This sinless pair wore no artificial garments. They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear." Spiritual Gifts, 3:34. Cf. EGW, "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:7, 9 (July 28, August 18, 1874):51, 67. So long as they were obedient to their Maker, the original pair wore this garment of light, but when they sinned they lost it and realized then that they were naked. Ibid., p. 51. This is an interpretation of Gen 3:7 which speaks of their "shame" in nakedness. John Matteson appealed to Ps 8:5 for Biblical proof of this view: "Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor." Matteson argued that in man's Fall nature refused to "hide our deformities," hence the need for artificial garments

The church's view on the nature of man's physical being did not change from that of Storrs, and it paralleled the early Christian notion of the middle nature.¹ Man was not created to die but whether he lived eternally was conditional upon his faithful response to God. Never-ending existence was within man's grasp, but he was not immortal at creation. For God to have demonstrated that kind of planning and lack of foresight would have been an "egregious blunder."² Proof of this conditionalism was to be seen in 1 Tim 6:15-16, i.e., "only God hath immortality."³

Smith clearly articulated the middle nature theory in his answer to a reader of the Review and Herald:

Adam was not created either mortal or immortal; for those were the conditions in reference to which he was put on trial. He was on probation, to decide by his own course of conduct whether he would live or die.⁴

today. See John Matteson, "Crowned with Glory and Honor," RH 36:2 (June 28, 1870):14-15. SDAs did not draw out spiritual implications of this "light."

¹J. N. Loughborough, "Was Adam Ever Immortal?" RH 25:9 (January 24, 1865):68-69. Loughborough is quoting his book, Hope of the Gospel, in the early part of this statement: "'From what source do we derive our immortality? It must be inherent, derived from Adam or else it comes to us directly from God. We reply, we did not get it from Adam; for he did not have it himself.' Neither should I claim that Adam was created mortal, but he certainly occupied a different position before his transgression from what he did after. Before his transgression he had a right to the tree of life. By obedience and partaking of that tree his existence would have been perpetuated eternally. He chose to take of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He was shut away from the tree of life, and became absolutely mortal. He was not absolutely immortal before, but his immortality was inherent in the tree of life. By obedience and partaking of that tree would have lived forever."

²W. H. Littlejohn, "Adam and Immortality," RH 62:27 (July 7, 1885):427. See D. M. Canright, "The Scripture Doctrine of a Future Life—No. 2," ST 5:4 (January 23, 1879):25-26; M. C. Wilcox, "Life Through Christ," RH 58:25 (December 20, 1881):389.

³*Ibid.* Cf. W. H. Littlejohn, "Immortality Not a Birthright," RH 70:41, 47 (October 17, November 28, 1893):647, 742-743.

⁴Uriah Smith, "In the Question Chair," RH 73:29 (July 21, 1896):457.

Passing the probationary trial was the key to eternal access to the tree of life, the source of immortality.¹ The original sin was directly related to man's loss of dominion and life.² "They [Adam and Eve] had the privilege of being obedient and living forever, or of transgressing and suffering death."³ Should Adam have passed the probationary test of loyalty he would have, "after a suitable period of probation," gained life and been established in immortality, just as those who pass the second probation, i.e., that provided by the Saviour, shall finally attain it.⁴

The SDAs utilized the language of covenant theology with respect to man's original probation. Smith wrote:

We go back to Adam in his innocence in Eden. He was placed, was he not, under a covenant of works? There was just one simple condition—obey and live. A law was given by which to direct his conduct; and he had power in his uprightness to comply fully with the demands of that law.⁵

¹A. C. Spicer, "The Commandments—Part I," RH 48:9 (August 24, 1876):66-67.

²J. N. Andrews, "History of the Sabbath," RH 19:1 (December 3, 1861):1-2; C. C. L., "The Inheritance of the Saints," RH 62:9 (March 3, 1885):134. See Uriah Smith's response to N. Wardner, in "Death," RH 55:19 (May 6, 1880):290-292.

³Uriah Smith, "Death—No. 2," RH 56:21 (November 18, 1880):322-324. Cf. Uriah Smith, "The Resurrection of the Wicked," RH 61:28 (July 8, 1884):440.

⁴Uriah Smith, "In the Question Chair," RH 73:32 (August 11, 1896):505. James White wrote, "Our first parents lost their hold on immortal life, for which they were put on probation. In obedience they soon would have developed righteous characters, been placed beyond the reach of sin, and would have secured endless life in favor with God." "Resurrection of the Dead," RH 49:10 (March 8, 1877):76.

⁵Uriah Smith, "Our Righteousness Again," RH 66:27 (July 2, 1889):424. Cf. D. M. Canright, "Faith and Works," RH 27:21 (April 24, 1866):161: "Faith in Christ was as necessary to salvation in the days of Noah, or Adam, as it is to-day. Before the fall, man might have been justified by works only, without faith. . . . As long as Adam had obeyed this command [Gen 2:16-17], he would have lived, had it been ten years, or a thousand, or forever. As long as he did not disobey God by partaking of the forbidden fruit, just so long the day in which he should surely die, would

This covenant of works provided for a righteousness by obedience which would preserve man's loyalty to God and therefore cause man to attain to immortality. But immortality itself was a gift of God contingent upon proof or demonstration of a kind of "worthiness."¹ Man was "on trial" until he developed a perfect character.² He was created to be immortal, he was not created as immortal.³ Death was not intended to be known because the world was created without a taint of sin, with no evil of any kind, and under no condemnation at all.⁴ Under such conditions death had no place in God's plan.

Hence Adam's original nature was not only considered from the perspective of physical consequences but also from the moral and spiritual

not come. Hence he could live, or continue to be justified, by keeping the commands of God,—by his works." Ibid.: "But at length man sinned. . . . Now a Saviour became necessary: now they needed faith, and could no longer be saved without it. Could they now be justified by simply keeping the law in the future? No, for they were bound to do this any way, if they had never sinned at all. Simply doing their duty, could not atone for their sins." Compare this to the Westminster Confession 7.2 (Leith, 202): "The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience." Ibid., 7.3 (Leith, 202): "Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offered unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him they they may be saved, . . ."

¹R. F. Cottrell, "Nature and Destiny of Man—No. 2," RH 56:23 (December 2, 1880):361-362.

²John Matteson, "Crowned with Glory and Honor," p. 14. Cf. J. N. Andrews, "Immortality Through Christ," RH 43:7 (January 27, 1874):52; F. J. Hutchins, "The True Object of Life," RH 69:7 (February 16, 1892):98; and W. H. Littlejohn, "Immortality Not a Birthright," RH 70:48 (December 5, 1893):759.

³R. F. Cottrell, "Proof of Natural Immortality," RH 28:2 (June 12, 1866):12; W. H. Littlejohn, "Immortality Not a Birthright," p. 759.

⁴J. N. Andrews, "The Evil Heart of Unbelief," RH 34:6 (August 2, 1869):42-43. Cf. EGW, "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:7, 9 (July 28, August 18, 1874):51, 67.

standpoint of sin and righteousness. Original man held communion with God and was taught by God.

Adam and Eve in Eden were placed under most favorable circumstances. It was their privilege to hold communion with God and angels. They were without the condemnation of sin. The light of God and angels was with them, and around about them. The Author of their existence was their teacher.¹

This theme of Adam's closeness to God was often expressed in Adventist literature, especially toward the end of the century when more emphasis was put upon the effects of sin as separation from God.² An evidence of this union was seen in the fact that at creation God had "imprinted" the law on man's heart as a part of his nature. By this Adventists expressed their belief that man had a moral dimension, i.e., a spiritual capacity for divine fellowship.³

The middle nature notion extended not only to the physical position of man but the spiritual as well. The most common term used to describe man's original moral state was "innocence." Uriah Smith explains:

At the moment of Adam's creation, he was neither righteous nor unrighteous, he had no character; in all this respect he was a blank. God made him innocent, he could not have made him otherwise.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 67.

²C. P. Whitford, "An Open Letter," RH 67:33 (August 26, 1890):515-516. See also James White, "Saving Faith," ST 4:2 (January 10, 1878):12.

³J. N. Andrews, "Scripture Facts Concerning Man's Nature and Destiny," RH 43:17 (April 7, 1874):132: "God put within man by nature a copy of his law." EGW, "Christ and the Law," RH 45:18 (April 29, 1875):138: "Adam and Eve at their creation had knowledge of the original law of God. It was imprinted on their hearts, and they were acquainted with the claims of the law upon them." In Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 363, EGW wrote: "Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts."

⁴Uriah Smith, "The Law and Life," RH 66:32 (August 6, 1889):504.

A distinction was clearly drawn between the notion of being "holy" and being "righteous": "Man was therefore holy, not righteous; for righteousness implies a character formed in harmony with a rule of right, but holy in the sense that he belonged to God, and was wholly free from sin.¹"

Following is a sampling of statements from SDA writers arranged chronologically through the four decades from 1860-1900 which present the preponderance of thinking on the subject:²

J. N. Andrews ³	[1860]	Man was innocent and free from guile.
	[1874]	He made him an upright innocent being.
	[1874]	Where innocence prevails (Andrews uses the term "innocence" 10 times in this article).
	[1874]	Man was made with a moral nature capable of distinguishing right from wrong.
	[1878]	Man was created capable of falling, though innocent.
Ellen White ⁴	[1864]	They were sinless.
	[1870]	In their holy innocence.
	[1874]	He [Adam] was without the taint of sin.
	[1875]	It [the law] was imprinted upon their hearts. . . . happy innocence.
	[1890]	He [Adam] was holy and happy in bearing the image of God, and in perfect obedience to his will.

¹"Tithes and Offerings," Bible Students Library, 1 (July 6, 1889):2-3.

²The entries in footnotes (3-4, p. 298; 1-2, p. 299) have been arranged in the order corresponding to the appearance of the quoted statements in the text. The statements themselves are direct quotations.

³"The Two Laws," RH 16:1-2 (May 29, 1860):12-13; "Immortality Through Christ," RH 43:7 (January 27, 1874):52; "The Entrance of Death," RH 43:14 (March 17, 1874):108; "Scripture Facts Concerning Man's Nature and Destiny," RH 43:17 (April 7, 1874):132; "Immortality Through Christ," ST 4:47 (December 12, 1878):372-373.

⁴Spiritual Gifts (1864), 4:120; "Practical Remarks," RH 35:18 (April 19, 1870):138-139; "The Temptations of Christ," RH 44:7 (July 28, 1874):51; "Christ and the Law," RH 45:18 (April 29, 1875):138; Patriarchs and Prophets (1890), p. 45.

Uriah Smith ¹	[1858]	Man stands forth in his innocence and uprightness, untainted with sin, unafflicted with evil.
	[1870]	The world in its innocence and purity.
	[1890]	He [Adam] was pure and innocent.
James White ²	[1870]	His [Adam's] moral rectitude and innocency.
	[1874]	Innocence and purity of character.
	[1874]	Innocent Adam in holy Eden.

Similar phraseology was used in the writings of other Adventists such as R. M. Kilgore, G. W. Morse, D. M. Canright, and A. C. Spicer.³

G. C. Tenney, co-editor of the Review and Herald, explained what SDAs meant by innocence by defining the term as "freedom from moral taint or sin; purity of heart; artlessness, sinlessness."⁴ However, innocence was

¹"Was Adam a Type?" RH 31:8 (February 4, 1868):120; "Times of Refreshing," RH 35:18 (April 19, 1870):140; "In Question Chair," RH 67:44 (November 11, 1890):696-697.

²"The Spirit of Prophecy," RH 35:5 (January 25, 1870):36-37; "Redemption," ST 1:1 (June 11, 1874):12; "The New Earth," RH 49:12 (March 22, 1877):93.

³R. M. Kilgore, "The Law and Its Penalty—No. 2," RH 61-29 (July 15, 1884):450-451: "A state of innocency;" G. W. Morse, "Adam's Death," RH 63:8 (February 23, 1886):123: "He [Adam] was sinless—in a state of moral rectitude;" D. M. Canright, "The Object of Creation," RH 39:19 (April 23, 1872):145-146: "His [Adam's] innocence;" A. C. Spicer, "The Commandments—Part I," RH 48:9 (August 24, 1876):66-67: "His [Adam's] innocence."

⁴G. C. Tenney, "The Knowledge of Evil," RH 73:39 (September 29, 1895):620: "The knowledge of evil is the loss of innocence. We understand innocence to be freedom from moral taint or sin; purity of heart; artlessness, sinlessness. . . . Our first parents lost their innocence. . . . Our Heavenly Father did not design or desire that man should gain a knowledge of evil, and sought to hedge up the way by a simple and direct command, which was, so far as we know, the only restriction laid upon the happy pair in Eden. This was probably all the restraint they needed. Purity of heart means abhorrence of evil. He who is pure in his desires and uncontaminated in the tendencies of his nature, would no more do a wrong than a man in his right mind would drink poison. The very thought of evil is repugnant to him. But if he permits his curiosity to be aroused by seductive influences, he opens the gate to the citadel of his moral strength. Desire quickly enters, sin is invited, and instantly the whole moral system is tainted with its deadly virus. Innocence is thus sacrificed, and henceforth the struggle

not to be confused with righteousness or genuine character. Rather it was the simple state of non-involvement with sin. Only continuing in obedience would make a man "righteous." M. E. Kellogg described innocence as a "negative" notion. He asserted that man was created in a position whereby he could become righteous or unrighteous.¹ Thus the middle nature had not only to do with mortality but with morality as well.

This middle character, or nature, view was consistently expressed from the time of Storrs through the turn of the century. Man was placed on this earth to develop a holy character.² Innocence was the notion of no character—the middle, or neutral, ground with respect to direction. This was not to say that man was immoral. SDAs were clear that originally man had no propensities or tendencies to sin. On the one hand, he was not attracted to evil by nature; but, on the other hand, he had no character since such could not be created by God but must be developed by man—character was a term referring to the spiritual growth subsequent to the passing of probationary tests. In the words of A. C. Spicer and James White:

against wrong must be urged against foes that are entrenched in the heart, and have in possession every member of the body. Sin becomes a heredity. Its tendencies are transmitted both in nature and practise [sic] from father to son, and no power on earth can check its course."

¹M. E. Kellogg, "A Second Probation," RH 75:13 (March 29, 1898):198: "Man was simply innocent at the first. Obedience would have made him righteous. His position at first was negative, with a possibility of changing to a positive character of righteousness or unrighteousness. He chose the wrong, and became sinful and unrighteous, loving evil and hating good. He is now granted another opportunity, but not as before; for, instead of being innocent of sin, as he was before his fall, his whole being is infected with the virus of sin. He is now an enemy of God. He cannot stand in his former place, and a second probation, pure and simple, would simply insure his eternal loss: for now he has a decided bent toward evil, and his power to seek the good and to obey God is greatly weakened."

²See G. H. Rogers, "Does the Gospel Abrogate the Ten Commandments?" RH 60:34 (August 21, 1883):531-532.

Character, including righteousness (holiness) is not a spontaneous unfolding, but must be developed by activities, by trials, by tests.¹

Our first parents lost their hold on immortal life, for which they were put on probation. In obedience they soon would have developed righteous characters, been placed beyond the reach of sin, and would have secured endless life in favor with God.²

In short, the Adventist presentation regarding the original physical and spiritual condition of man did not change essentially from that of Storrs. There was a trend to move from the strong emphasis on conditional mortality to a deeper concern for righteousness and the moral implications of Adam's Fall. Particularly is this true following 1888. But throughout the first fifty years SDAs taught consistently that Adam was created innocent with a middle moral nature, a capacity to hold spiritual communion with God which would have put him finally beyond the reach of sin—its claims and its power—through the development of character. The relationship guaranteed strength against evil's allurements (as represented by the tree of knowledge of good and evil) and therefore gave man an edge—he was holy and innocent. SDAs were careful to avoid the word "righteousness" when describing the original moral nature of Adam.

The Undesirable Inheritance of Adam

Death as the Undesirable Inheritance

What has been passed on to all men in Adam's original sin? The answer for the early SDAs was to be found simply stated in the language of the Scriptural text itself: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

¹A. C. Spicer, "The Ten Commandments," RH 48:6 (August 3, 1876):42.

²James White, "Resurrection of the Dead," RH 49:10 (March 8, 1877):76. Cf. J. H. Waggoner, Eden to Eden, pp. 15-16.

Rom 5:12. They read it as it is emphasized here. The text was self-explanatory for them.¹ It was death that Adam provided for his posterity as the undesirable inheritance.² G. P. Wilson called it the "fearful sentence" that was pronounced upon all men because of "original sin."³

There was unity among all the pioneers on this point. Death was the problem to be solved. All receive Adam's legacy of death.⁴ The "great salvation" of Christ is the salvation from death, the legacy inherited directly from Adam,⁵ i.e., "Adam's sin involved the entire community."⁶

¹See J. H. Waggoner, Angels: Their Nature and Ministry (Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1891), p. 108: "Sin was the ruin of the race; it was that whereby Adam brought death upon his posterity."

²A. C. Spicer, "The Ten Commandments," RH 48:6 (August 3, 1876):42; C. P. Whitford, "An Open Letter," RH 67:33 (August 26, 1890): 515-516. William Covert, "Eternal Life," RH 68:32 (August 11, 1891):498-499. Notice *ibid.*, p. 498: "We were all sold under sin in Adam and as long as we hold claim to the Adamic life, we are but the slaves of Satan, and have no life of our own." Cf. W. H. Littlejohn, "Immortality Not a Birthright," RH 70:48 (December 5, 1893):760.

³G. P. Wilson, "The Destiny of the Ungodly," RH 16:8 (July 10, 1860):61: "Thereby [Adam and Eve] brought sin upon themselves and their posterity, the fearful sentence is pronounced upon all men, 'Thou shalt surely die.'" Wilson continues: "He [Christ] suffered the penalty of Adam's sin, that we being set free from the claims of the broken law, might have life beyond the grave, and if obedient during our own individual lives, might enjoy the same to all eternity." By "penalty of Adam's sin" Wilson means the second death which is consistently set forth in SDA literature as such. Later in his article he adds: "They [those who disregard the Atonement] are subject to the original penalty, death, though it is to take place in a different manner from the death consequent upon original sin. It is the second death." Wilson makes the SDA distinction between (1) the penalty of Adam's sin and (2) the consequence of original sin. "Adam's sin" and "original sin" are synonymous. But the penalty is the second death, while the consequence is the first death.

⁴R. F. Cottrell, "The Second Adam—The Life Giver," RH 23:17 (March 22, 1864):133. See J. H. Waggoner, From Eden to Eden, p. 231.

⁵J. H. Waggoner, "The Atonement," RH 24:15 (September 6, 1864):117-118; V. O. Edson, "Effects of Obedience and Transgression," RH 25:17 (March 28, 1865):154.

⁶G. C. Tenney, "Coming Short," RH 71:30 (July 24, 1894):472-473.

The sentence which God pronounced upon transgression in the garden of Eden was death. . . . The penalty pronounced upon Adam, in which we are all involved, . . . [is] the reduction of the real responsible man to the dust of the ground.¹

Here was the uniform interpretation of Rom 5:12. J. N. Andrews declared, "Death entered by sin, and passed upon all men."² Various expressions were employed but the thought was always the same: "All perished through Adam's sin;"³ "Death cannot be found anywhere there is no sin;"⁴ "The whole race was lost when our first parents sinned. Death passed upon all;"⁵ "Adam's sin involved his whole posterity in ruin."⁶ "Had man never sinned, the death penalty could not have rested on the human race, because death came by sin."⁷ And Ellen G. White summed up the view:

Sorrow filled heaven, as it was realized that man was lost, and that world which God had created was to be filled with mortals doomed to misery, sickness, and death, and there was no escape for the offender. The whole family of Adam must die.⁸

¹Uriah Smith, "The Biblical Institute," ST 3:33 (August 23, 1867):258-259. Cf. R. F. Cottrell, "Why Do Men Die?" RH 53:12 (March 20, 1879):92-93; Bible Readings (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1888), p. 135; W. H. Brown, Christ Our Advocate (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1894), p. 109.

²J. N. Andrews, "Institution of the Sabbath," RH 16:1-2 (May 29, 1860):10-12. Cf. J. N. Andrews, "Immortality Through Christ," RH 43:7 (January 27, 1874):52.

³S. S. Griswold, "Do the Scriptures Teach the Annihilation of the Wicked or Finally Impenitent?" RH 41:9 (February 11, 1873):67. Remarks probably by Uriah Smith.

⁴John C. Matteson, "The Gospel of Christ," RH 49:18 (May 3, 1877):141.

⁵R. F. Cottrell, "Nature and Destiny of Man.—No. 6," RH 57:3 (January 18, 1881):34-35. Cf. Bible Readings, p. 147.

⁶"Lessons on the Letter to the Hebrews," Sabbath School Quarterly (Oakland: International Sabbath School Assn., 1889), p. 17.

⁷J. O. Corliss, "Why Christ's Ministry Was Confined to Palestine," RH 73:48 (December 1, 1896):758.

⁸Early Writings, p. 149.

In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave.¹

Original sin thus brought death. Adam did not simply involve himself. There were corporate implications to his sin: it brought death to all his descendants. That death was unequivocal and unconditional. Interpreting Rom 5:14, the author of the Sabbath School Lessons for 1889 wrote:

Adam's sin involved his whole posterity in ruin. He stood as their representative, and the gifts of God to him were intended for all his race. See Gen. 1:28; Ps. 115:16. But as none of Adam's posterity represented a race, none of them could involve his posterity by his action. And therefore none of them has sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.²

Adam's sin was unique in that it had the corporate Fall of man connected with it.³ Adam had within him all the human race and thus involved the race.⁴

The following representative statements underscore the singular view of Adventists on this subject.⁵ It is immediately noticed how thoroughly the wording of Storrs persisted through the remainder of the century:

¹The Great Controversy, p. 544.

²"Lessons on the Letter to the Hebrews," p. 17.

³See Tenney, "Coming Short," p. 473.

⁴The Adventist conception was a rejection of Pelagianism in this respect. The Pelagians had refused to connect man's death with Adam's sin, insisting instead that man was created by nature mortal and would have died regardless of whether he sinned (see above, p. 110). The SDA view understands a direct cause-and-effect relationship between Adam and his posterity. Augustine would also have insisted on this kind of relationship, as would the western tradition in general.

⁵The entries in the footnotes on the next three pages (pp. 305-307) have been arranged in the order corresponding to the appearance of the quoted statements in the text. The statements themselves are direct quotations.

- Uriah Smith¹ [1860] Adam could bequeath to his posterity no higher nature than he himself possessed. The stream that, commencing in the garden of Eden, has flowed down through the lapse of 6000 years, has certainly never risen higher than the fountainhead; and we may be sure we possess no superior endowments in this respect to those of Adam.
- [1873] Adam transgressed and the penalty was inflicted. He became possessed of a mortal dying nature. He could bequeath to his posterity no higher nature than he possessed; hence the unborn millions of the race were involved with him in the effects of that penalty . . . subject to death.
- [1880] Adam, having brought himself into a dying state, could transmit to his posterity no higher nature than he possessed; hence all the race have been mortal, subject to death.
- [1880] Had nothing else been done, this would have been the final condition, both of Adam and of his posterity, for he could transmit to his children no higher physical nature than he himself possessed; and after they had fallen in death, they would forever have remained as though they had not been.
- [1884] Adam could bequeath to his posterity no higher nature than he possessed,—a nature, after his transgression, not only liable, but inevitably doomed, to death. The same plane of being was his children's only heritage,—a heritage of wearing toil during the period of their life, and after that, death. And this, remember, was because their father Adam had sinned.
- [1888] And so death passed upon Adam, and in him, upon all men, inasmuch as they are the posterity of Adam, and he could beget then to no higher plane than that which he himself occupied after the fall—a mortal condition, a dying state, . . . death.

¹Which? Mortal or Immortal? (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1860), p. 34; "Does Rom. 5:18, 19, Teach Universalism?" p. 156; "Death," p. 292, 323; "The Resurrection of the Wicked," p. 440; "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," p. 425; "All Made Righteous," p. 72; "In the Question Chair," RH 70:27 (July 4, 1893):434; "Many Made Righteous," p. 329.

- [1891] All who should ever live in this world became subject to death; for Adam could not transmit to his posterity any higher nature than that which he himself possessed, which was then subject to death.
- [1893] This entailed death upon Adam, and consequently upon all his posterity; for the stream can rise no higher than the fountain.
- [1898] Adam's sin brought in death; and as all the world was to be peopled from him, death then passed upon all men; that is, the whole prospective race came under the dominion of death; for Adam could transmit to his children no higher nature than he himself possessed, which was a mortal, dying nature; and he had fallen into this condition before the first child was born.
- A. S. Hutchins¹ [1867] As Adam could impart nothing to his posterity better than what he now possessed, a race of sinners under the sentence of death came forth.
- J. N. Andrews² [1868] Life is transmitted from parents to children. . . . We cannot take from the first Adam what [immortality] he had not to give.
- [1874] Adam's nature being sinful [dying], he could transmit to his posterity no purer nature than himself possessed. . . . He now possessed only a dying life, and all who are descended from him can by nature possess no higher life than this.
- [1876] Adam forfeited the right to live. He could transmit no higher life to his posterity than he possessed himself.
- I. D. Van Horn³ [1869] If the parents possess a dying nature, the children cannot rise any higher in the scale of being, and, therefore, possess the same.

¹"The Sources of True Prosperity," RH 29:19 (April 16, 1867):217-219.

²"The Return of the Spirit of God," RH 33:1 (December 29, 1868):1-2; "The Entrance of Death," RH 43:14 (March 17, 1874):108; "Brief Thoughts Concerning Life and Death," RH 34:12 (September 14, 1869):92.

³"A False Hope," RH 34:11 (September 7, 1869):81.

- J. H. Waggoner¹ [1873] Adam could bequeath to his posterity no more than he possessed. He forfeited his dominion and his inheritance and possessed it but a little while. . . . Our inheritance from Adam is of death.
- D. M. Canright² [1877] Adam could not give to his descendants what he did not have himself. To illustrate: My father owned a farm once, but he lost it before he died, and hence I cannot inherit it,—he could not give to me what he did not himself possess.
- R. M. Kilgore³ [1884] In him [Adam] are the seeds of death, and he can but transmit the same to his children.
- Ellen G. White⁴ [1884] Immortality had been promised on condition of obedience to the requirements of God. It was forfeited by disobedience, and Adam became subject to death. He could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not possess; and there would have been no hope for the fallen race, had not God, by the sacrifice of his Son, brought immortality within their reach.
- E. R. Jones⁵ [1889] Paul signified the carnal nature,—the innate depravity received as a lamentable inheritance by every soul born upon this earth from our common father Adam. He could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not himself possess; and therefore we ask, with anxious concern, How came the father of the race by this deep-seated principle of rebellion against God and insubordinated to his holy law, which he has bequeathed as a sad and wretched legacy to all the human family?

¹"The One Hope," RH 42:13 (September 9, 1873):97-98.

²"Life and Death," ST 3:3 (January 11, 1877):18-19.

³"The Law and Its Penalty,—No. 3," RH 61:30 (July 22, 1884):467.

⁴The Spirit of Prophecy, 4:352-353.

⁵"The Law of Sin," RH 66:11 (March 12, 1889):164.

W. H. Littlejohn¹ [1893] Inasmuch, therefore, as Adam did die, he could not have been immortal, and if he was not immortal, his posterity could not inherit immortality from him.

In addition to these clear statements there was a corporate solidarity represented in SDA discussions of the origin of the law of God for man. A case of this is seen in the argument of J. M. Hopkins, who, writing in 1886, used the fact of the original sin as proof that the ten commandments were known, or at least in existence, in Adam's day. By their disobedient act Adam and Eve broke the sixth commandment for "they brought death upon themselves and their posterity," that is to say, they murdered the human race.² The concept of corporate solidarity seems presupposed if Adam, in one act, could murder the race.

The Nature of Death

To hold that death was the penalty for original sin was not to differ from Protestant Christianity which had traditionally rooted its doctrine in Rom 5:12-21. However, because of its peculiar view of conditional immortality Adventism's major difference of opinion with Protestant orthodoxy of its day concerned the nature of death. The Calvinists had insisted on death being spiritual, temporal, and eternal. This was true in the Westminster Confession and others. Storrs had challenged that. Stephenson, Hall, Loughborough, and Smith espoused Storrs' challenge. And this challenge was kept alive through the remainder of the century. Uriah Smith was the unquestioned spokesman for Adventists in terms of the sheer volume of material he produced on the subject. His view remained virtually

¹"Immortality Not a Birthright," RH 70:41 (October 17, 1893):647.

²J. M. Hopkins, "The Law Known before Moses," RH 63:21 (May 25, 1886):323-324. Cf. Smith, "The Ten Commandments in Eden," p. 760.

unchanged through the century from what it had been in the first decade.¹

Adventist theology treated death from two perspectives: (1) in terms of "first" and "second" death (Rev 20), and (2) in terms of "temporal" vs. "spiritual" and "eternal" death (Rom 5-6).

The First and Second Deaths

Scripture speaks of two deaths.² The first death came to all, irrespective of character, due to "the original Adamic sin."³ It was a cessation of the life God originally gave Adam; a life which man inherits. Due to Adam, man's representative, every person suffers that death.⁴ This punishment is certain because all mankind was identified with Adam.⁵

¹A comprehensive listing of Uriah Smith's contributions to this argument includes: The State of the Dead and the Destiny of the Wicked (Battle Creek: SDA Publishing Assn., 1873); Man's Nature and Destiny, 3d. ed. (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1884); Synopsis of Present Truth (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1884); "The Death of Adam," RH 40:22 (November 12, 1872):172. "The Wages of Sin," RH 40:26 (December 10, 1872):204; "Does Rom. 5:18, 19, Teach Universalism?" RH 41:20 (April 29, 1873):156; Reply to N. Wardner, "Death," RH 55:19, 56:22 (May 6, November 18, 1880):290-292, 322-324; "The Resurrection of the Wicked," RH 61:28 (July 8, 1884):440; "Resurrection of the Wicked, Again," RH 61:32, 33 (August 5, 12, 1884):504-505, 520; "The Four Laws," RH 64:25 (June 21, 1887):392; "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," RH 65:27 (July 3, 1888):424-425; "In the Question Chair: All Made Righteous," RH 68:5 (February 3, 1891):72-73; "The Law of Sin," RH 69:33 (August 16, 1892):518; "The Resurrection of the Wicked," RH 70:27 (July 4, 1893):434; "The Outward and the Inward Man," RH 73:7 (February 18, 1896):104; "Christ Our Brother," RH 74:11 (March 16, 1897):169; "The Abounding Grace," RH 74:22 (June 1, 1897):344; "Many Made Righteous," RH 74:21 (May 25, 1898):329-330.

²D. M. Canright, "Life and Death," ST 3:3 (January 11, 1877):18-19.

³Uriah Smith, "The Wrath of God," RH 32:22 (November 24, 1868):252. See J. N. Andrews, "The Entrance of Death," RH 43:14 (March 17, 1874):108; Waggoner, From Eden to Eden, p. 237.

⁴Griswold, "Do the Scriptures Teach the Annihilation of the Wicked?" p. 67.

⁵J. N. Andrews, "Paradise," RH 33:18 (April 27, 1869):138. Andrews emphasizes the certainty of Adam's punishment just as Storrs had done (Storrs, Six Sermons, pp. 112-113). Andrews writes: "The very day that

The death man dies in Adam must be understood more broadly than simply an instantaneous return to non-existence. It was a progressively "dying" nature.¹ It was "mortality," or extinction of life, a state of utter unconsciousness—eventually.² Sometimes SDAs referred to this as the sinful nature: "Remember that a dying nature and a sinful nature are identical."³

Albert Stone, an Adventist minister in Vermont whose son later

he [Adam] would commit the act, his death should be made certain and inevitable." This is an early statement (1869) and is primarily concerned with law and death. A. A. Phelps ("Is Man Immortal?" ST 2:1 [October 28, 1875]:1) is still concerned with death but emphasizes the corporate nature of Adam's act in relation to death: "Every child of Adam has a distinct probation and is accountable to God for his probationary career. The Adamic death comes to all as a common calamity; but the 'second death' will be visited upon man for his personal sins." Thus there is an identification of mankind with Adam's sin since all die as a result. M. G. Kellogg ("Why Do We Die?" ST 2:23 [May 18, 1876]:183) also stresses this: "The Holy Scriptures tell us that man need never have died. It was the transgression of moral law that introduced death to the human family; and all must pass down to the grave, not because of personal transgression, but because our first parents, in forfeiting their right to a continuous existence, subjected their posterity to the same doom." By 1888 SDAs were using language that included the concerns of soteriology as inclusive of more than simple deliverance from death. G. W. Morse wrote ("Faith vs. the Deeds of the Law as a Means of Justification," RH 65:25 [June 19, 1888]:394): "As the entire race sinned in Adam, all are reckoned under sin; in every human being there appears that which is an infraction of God's standard of righteousness—his law of ten commandments. . . . Were there no provision for salvation, other than the righteousness that human beings might secure by their own acts of conformity to God's law, none would be saved; for in each and every instance there would appear the infraction occasioned by the Adamic sin, enlarged and intensified by whatever of sin the individual may have committed." Here is indicated man's corporate sin in Adam.

¹Wm. S. Ingraham, "A Few Thoughts on the Penalty of the Original Law," RH 23:6 (January 5, 1864):45. Cf. G. W. Morse, "Nature of the Death That Was Threatened Adam," RH 65:37 (September 11, 1888):585-586.

²G. P. Wilson, "The Destiny of the Ungodly," p. 61. See W. H. Brown, Christ Our Advocate, p. 109.

³E. Goodrich, "Grace Through Unrighteousness," RH 16:19 (September 25, 1860):149. Goodrich argues that true Christian freedom is liberty from sinful nature, not freedom from God's law. God provides freedom from lust and sin involving a complete change of nature. "The necessity, consistency and beauty of such a reformation as this, is the better seen and realized when we remember that a dying nature and a sinful nature are identical. To be delivered from one is to be freed from the other."

became the local editor of the Review and Herald, presented the common Adventist notion that this mortality was the result of "original sin" and no atonement was made to deal with it, so man must die for himself.¹ The Gospel made no provision, he wrote, for escape from original sin:

The sin by which Adam forfeited the inheritance, and the life which God gave him, finds no expiation in the blood of Christ, nor in the gospel system. No substitute has been provided to screen man from death. The atonement for original sin, requires not the death of a substitute but the death of every individual of the race. . . . The idea of an atonement at once frees man from the penalty. But the penalty is daily being executed, therefore there is no atonement for original sin.²

Stone further reasoned that God had set up two systems whereby man could attain freedom from death: (1) the tree of life, a source which man lost access to due to his disloyalty, and (2) the gospel, an entirely different system by which life could be attained. These rubrics appear to be an Adventist version of the covenant theology terms (1) covenant of works and (2) covenant of grace. There was no pardon under the first system—no mercy, no forgiveness, no plan of redemption. Therefore man dies the "first death," in Adam.³

¹Albert Stone, "Thou Shalt Surely Die," RH 22:24 (November 10, 1863):190.

²Ibid. See further, Albert Stone, "The Wages of Sin," RH 31:4 (January 7, 1868):49-50: "Original sin, as it is termed, or the sin of the first pair, which is the sole cause of death, finds no atonement in the blood of Christ. . . . If atonement for original sin had been included in God's plan of redeeming the world by his Son, then man would not have died; the execution of the sentence would have been stayed, and the race effectually and forever reprieved. . . . Do not forget that no atonement is made for original sin by the death of Christ. If, then, the threatening includes eternal conscious suffering, it follows that man cannot be saved by any plan which does not include in itself an atonement for original sin. The gospel of Christ can do nothing for men possessing natural immortality." Cf. Albert Stone, "Not Pardoned," RH 49:8 (February 22, 1877):64: "There is no provision in the gospel for the forgiveness of original sin." Cf. Uriah Smith, "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," RH 65:27 (July 3, 1888):424-425.

³Ibid. Cf. Henry E. Carver, "The Death Incurred by Sin," RH 23:12 (February 16, 1864):94.

In his Review and Herald articles Stone showed no compulsion to avoid the term "original sin," but he qualified it.¹ He did not have radical Augustinian notions of inherited guilt in mind when he employed the phrase. "Original sin" had no eternal consequences since Christ has worked out man's salvation. This theoretically eliminated the long arguments about the salvation or damnation of children who died in infancy—the debate that had continued in Augustinianism from the start. Stone did not concern himself with the question of the justice of man having to die for another's (Adam's) sin. Instead he discussed the surety of man's suffering that plight. Responsibility was not part of Stone's doctrine of original sin. The problem original sin created was only the first death.

In 1865, John Tinker suggested the same notion when he enumerated two aspects of the threat of death: (1) the dying nature and (2) personal punishment. The "dying nature," Tinker asserted, was the result of Adam's sin; personal punishment was the result of personal sin. Hence, the first death could not be the punishment for sin but must rather be the result of man's involvement with Adam.² R. F. Cottrell elaborated:

He [Adam] was doomed to a toiling, sweating, dying life, until he was dead. . . . "dying thou shalt die." It is better to accept of this interpretation like an honest man, than skeptically to quibble around it, because that Adam was not dead on the day of his transgression. The penalty has been faithfully executed from the day of Adam's transgression to the present: and though we are

¹See the Appendix for Stone's use of the term. Albert Stone (1803-1893) had been the oldest living ordained SDA minister. He had left the Baptist church during the Millerite preaching and he experienced the Great Disappointment with the Advent believers. His contributions to the Review and Herald are not numerous, but he writes succinctly on the subject of Adam's sin, and thus leaves clear examples of the SDA position. See "Death of Elder Albert Stone," RH 70:44 (November 7, 1893):701.

²John B. Tinker, "A Few Thoughts about Sin," RH 26:18 (October 23, 1865):142-143. Here is a variation of Storrs' argument.

dead, we feel and know that we are dying men and shall soon be dead unless the Life-giver descends from heaven with a reprieve.¹

By contrast the second death was the death that Christ's Atonement must deal with because here individual responsibility was involved. It was under the divine plan of the gospel that Christ's Atonement would finally do away with sin. But this was a provision brought in through the plan of salvation by which a second probation gave man a chance to rectify what Adam had done to the individuals of the race.

A single death would have suffered for all the lost family of man, had not a second probation been granted through Christ, after the first was lost. Adam lost the first probation not only for himself, but for all his race. Christ, in giving a second probation to man, delivers him from the penalty incurred by Adam. Here a second life is given to all. But those who reject the gospel, are to have part in the second resurrection, which is not a resurrection to immortality, but "the resurrection of condemnation" to the "second death."²

This provision was invoked to restore the "ruin" that Adam had introduced. It was not God's plan to punish man in this life--rather, he will punish man for his personal sins in the day of judgment.³ But that penalty is also called death--the final, or "second death," and is the primary reason for the salvation offered through Christ.⁴

¹"The Death Incurred by Sin," RH 23:1 (December 1, 1863):5. See further J. H. Waggoner, "The Atonement," RH 44:5 (July 14, 1874):38-39. Stone's view was shared by the significant writers of Adventism between 1850 and 1900, including Smith, Waggoner, Andrews, Canright, Cottrell, and James White.

²R. F. Cottrell, "Immortality Brought to Light Through the Gospel," RH 25:14 (March 7, 1865):109-110.

³D. M. Canright, "The Resurrection of the Wicked Dead," RH 30:19 (October 22, 1867):289-291. See further Albert Stone, "Thou Shalt Surely Die," p. 190; Uriah Smith, "The Judgment of the Great Day," RH 62:18 (May 5, 1885):280-281.

⁴See also Uriah Smith, "The Wrath of God," p. 252. Compare W. H. Brown, Christ Our Advocate, p. 109, and J. H. Waggoner, "The Atonement," RH 44:5 (July 14, 1874):38-39.

This general view of the first and second deaths, especially with regard to the Atonement affecting only the second death, parallels Storrs' interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:22 which held that Adam's sin brought simple death. Had no Savior been available, simple death would have meant the end for man. But since Christ stepped in with the plan of salvation, man has available to him a resurrection after which he will stand responsible for his life prior to the first death. Just as death due to original sin is suffered irrespective of character, so the resurrection promised to all men in Christ is enjoyed irrespective of character: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all be made alive."¹ Both "alls" were to be understood literally.²

¹See Griswold, "Do the Scriptures Teach the Annihilation of the Wicked?" p. 67. Cf. R. M. Kilgore, "The Law and Its Penalty,—No. 3," RH 61:30 (July 22, 1884):467-469.

²The following are representative statements on this interpretation among the SDA writers. R. F. Cottrell, "Adam, the Sinner, Not to Live Forever," RH 23:4 (December 22, 1863):29: "The life which was given to our race in Adam is taken away, being forfeited by disobedience, it is utterly lost. And this though terrible is still merciful. To become immortal in sin, would be the greatest curse. . . . Life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel; and all are invited to come to Him who is the resurrection and the life. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. 'They that are Christ's at his coming.' He gives to his sheep eternal life and they shall never perish—they shall not be hurt of the second death." While Cottrell does not pursue the second half of the verse, he implies that even as those in Christ shall be resurrected to live, so those who are wicked shall be resurrected to experience the second death. Wm. S. Ingraham, "A Few Thoughts on the Penalty of the Original Law," RH 23:6 (January 5, 1864):45: "The blessed and holy will have a part in the first resurrection at the coming of Christ. But the sinner comes up in the second resurrection, and will be doomed to the second death as the reward of his own personal sins." C. P. Whitford, "Death and the Law," RH 33:3 (January 12, 1869):19: "From the Scriptures we learn two important facts: 1. That all must die on account of Adam's transgression. 2. That all are to be made alive through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection. . . . As death passed upon all on account of Adam's transgression, so life is given to all through the virtue of Christ's resurrection. . . . Once they die on account of Adam's transgression. Again they live by virtue of Christ's death and resurrection. Then they die the second death on account of their own transgressions; while on the other hand the righteous receive the gift of God, which is eternal

J. H. Kellogg wrote, "By virtue of Christ's resurrection, all mankind are entitled to a resurrection, so that each person will have an opportunity to stand or fall on his own merits."¹ In the Sabbath School lessons of 1883, the writer insisted that any other understanding of the text would encourage universalism.² Bible Readings for the Home Circle (1888) took this view,³ and Ellen White demonstrated its importance to Adventist theology by incorporating it in The Great Controversy in 1884:

In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon all mankind. All alike go down into the grave. But through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. Then those who have not secured the pardon of their sins must receive the penalty of transgression. They suffer punishment varying in duration and intensity according to their works, but finally ending in the second death. Covered with infamy, they sink into hopeless, eternal oblivion.⁴

In the 1888 edition of the book, Ellen White added the actual reading of the text to clarify her interpretation of Paul's message:

In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both

life through Jesus Christ." W. H. Ebert, "What We Believe of Man," RH 55:16 (April 15, 1880):246: "The same 'all' of mankind that died in Adam shall be made alive in Christ. 1 Cor. 15:22 . . . All will be raised to life; some, to die again; and some, to receive an eternal existence, in a world of glory and beauty."

¹"Reply [to N. Wardner]," RH 55:20 (May 13, 1880):307-308.

²"Lesson for the Fifth Sabbath in November," RH 60:46 (November 20, 1883):727: "'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive' (1 Cor. 15:22).—This is one of the strong texts of Universalism; but it simply has reference to the resurrection of all man from the Adamic, natural, or first death. . . . Through Adam, or in consequence of Adam's sin, man inherited death; as Adam's posterity were not directly responsible for his sin, Christ redeems them from the Adamic death, irrespective of character. Not to immortality, but to natural life. 1 Tim. 4:10; John 4:16." Cf. Uriah Smith, "Resurrection of the Wicked," RH 61:27 (July 1, 1884):432.

³Bible Readings, p. 141.

⁴Spirit of Prophecy, 4:364.

of the just and unjust;" "for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."¹

The summary by T. B. Snow succinctly and accurately represents the Adventist view of this period: "The first death, which is common for all, whether saint or sinner, is not the penalty for our individual sins, but the consequence of Adam's fall. Therefore it is the second death (Rev. 20:14) which is brought to view in the law; for this is the death which is the wages of sin."² Hence the SDAs understood Scripture to teach a temporal

¹The Great Controversy [1888 ed.] (Phoenix: Inspiration Books, 1967), p. 463. This reading remained in tact in the later, standard 1911 edition of the book.

It has been shown above that 1 Cor 15:22, as interpreted by George Storrs, made its appearance in early Adventism as a proof text for the first and second death as they related to the Adam-Christ typology, peculiarly understood by Adventist anthropology. Since SDAs were primarily concerned with anthropology, that is, the nature of man, they tended to overlook the soteriological meaning. Emphasis was put almost exclusively on Adam's incurring of temporal death for the race (especially is this true in Storrs' view. This interpretation persisted in the writings of Loughborough, Waggoner, Smith, the Stones, and to some extent in that of Ellen White, until the turn of the century.

It is interesting to note the change of emphasis on this text in contemporary SDA understanding as indicated in the SDA Bible Commentary. The editors of this 1957 work give no hint of the early Adventist view and make no reference to Ellen White's position. In fact, the position taken in 1957 makes the early view untenable: "In Christ. That is, through faith in his atoning death and life-giving resurrection. . . . All men are subject to death by virtue of Adam's sin and their own sinfulness, but only those who are 'in Christ' will share the eternal benefits of the Saviour's resurrection. To this extent, the first 'all' in this verse is universal, whereas the second 'all' is necessarily limited. Some have interpreted the second 'all' to embrace all mankind, [Ellen White did this], the wicked and the righteous. That this interpretation is not tenable here may be seen from the phrase 'in Christ,' and from comparison with vs. 51-53, where 'all' clearly refers only to believers." SDA Bible Commentary, 6:805.

²T. B. Snow, "Has the Law of God an Affixed Penalty," RH 75:5 (February 1, 1898):70-71.

and eternal death—consequence and punishment—but both of the nature of cessation from conscious life.

The Penalty of Death

While Adventists emphasized that the first death was a consequence of Adam's original sin and the second death was the penalty for man's personal sins, they also argued pointedly with their contemporaries concerning the nature of the death that constituted the penalty for sin. They agreed that death was the "wages of sin" but what kind of death? In answering this question their major concern continued to be anthropological.

Like the earliest Adventists, the new church writers (1860 and onward) took issue with any view that would spiritualize death. The generally received opinion of New England held that man's punishment was death—spiritual, temporal, and eternal.¹ By this was meant, respectively, (1) a state of sin; (2) a separation of body and soul; and (3) eternal misery. Cottrell insisted that such a view grew out of the assumption of the immortal soul (since such a soul could not die literally) and that in such a view death was a transitional stage.² But, on the contrary, he argued, death was literal—"a returning of the dust, which had become a living soul, back to the dust again."³

To a great degree the arguments of the first decade continued to serve SDA writers through the remainder of the century.⁴ Toward the end

¹Albert Stone, "Thou Shalt Surely Die," p. 190.

²R. F. Cottrell, "The Death Incurred by Sin," p. 5. Cf. R. F. Cottrell, "Nature and Destiny of Man," RH 56:23 (December 2, 1880):361-362.

³Ibid. Cf. W. H. Brown, Christ Our Advocate, pp. 109-112.

⁴B. F. Robbins, for example, gave a four-point argument akin to that of Storrs, Stephenson, and Hall, against the idea of spiritual or moral death, viz., "a state of alienation from God," or "death in trespasses and

of the era there is some discernible lessening of hostility toward what they perceived to be the "orthodox view." Undoubtedly the new emphasis on righteousness by faith contributed to this as soteriology introduces its own set of issues demanding answers.

In 1889 a tract appeared in which an unnamed author maintains that life was only one of the qualities man lost in Adam. He also lost holiness and dominion.

1. God created man upright and pronounced him good. Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 1:31. Man was therefore holy, not righteous; for righteousness implies a character formed in harmony with a rule of right, but holy in the sense that he belonged to God, and was wholly free from sin. He transgressed the command of God and became a sinner, or lost his holiness.
2. God gave him dominion

sins," as the penalty of Adam's sin ("Life A Reward," RH 15:14 [February 23, 1860]:10-11). First, he said, a state of sin [Robbins did not understand "moral death" apart from actual sin—it is a state of being dead in trespassing] is not a punishment and in reality (second) confounds the crime with the penalty. Third, Christ never paid the price for salvation if spiritual death was the penalty, for he did not sin [here is the characteristic SDA recapitulationism—Christ had to travel the same route as Adam and even that of present man]. Finally, the "orthodox" view is unscriptural because the Bible insists that the sinner must suffer the "second" death. In this case orthodoxy would be belief in the natural immortality of man. Compare this with J. H. Waggoner, "The Atonement," RH 43:15 (March 24, 1874):118. Another example of the old argument is that of W. S. Ingraham who, after presenting essentially the same line of reasoning, proceeded to show why he believed the penalty to be physical or corporeal death: (1) Gen 3:17-24 threatened that man would return to dust—that while man would inherit a "dying nature," that nature would eventually end in dust, and if it were not for Jesus' plan of salvation all mankind would have remained there. (2) Rom 5:12 makes it clear that it is "death" that is passed on to all. And finally (3) 1 Cor 15:22 indicates that Christ brings resurrection from the death which Adam introduced to the race, thereby showing that man will finally stand for his own sins rather than that of his progenitor. "A Few Thoughts on the Penalty of the Original Law," (RH 23:6 [January 5, 1864]:45). These same arguments would be repeated over and over again in the pages of SDA periodicals and books. Cf. just a few: H. F. Phelps, "Discussion at Pine Island, Minn.," pp. 138-139, where Phelps summarizes a sermon by Elder Ingraham; C. W. Stone, "Sin Is Too Expensive," RH 49:11 (March 15, 1877):84; C. W. Stone, "A Few Nuts for the Adventists to Crack," RH 49:20 (May 17, 1877):156; C. W. Stone, "What Was the Penalty?" RH 49:21 (May 24, 1877):164; R. F. Cottrell, "The Second Adam—The Life Giver," RH 23:17 (March 22, 1864):133; J. H. Waggoner, "The Atonement," RH 24:15 (September 6, 1864):117-118; Albert Stone, "The Wages of Sin," pp. 49-50; James White, "The Way of Life," ST 3:21 (January 4, 1877):10-11.

over the earth. Gen. 1:28, Ps. 115:16. But when man transgressed he became a child of Satan, a slave of sin (Rom. 7:14): and therefore his dominion passed to Satan, to whom he had yielded. 3. If man had continued to obey God, he would never have died. Righteousness tendeth to life (Prov. 10:16, 17; 11:30); but man sinned, and the wages of sin is death, Rom. 6:23. Therefore man lost by the fall holiness, dominion, and life.¹

While this view was not a great innovation, it did represent a view roughly equivalent to that of Calvinistic Protestantism though distinctly adapted to conditionalism. The Sabbath School Lesson Helps of 1893 elaborated that "to be placed in his original position before his Creator, man must be redeemed from condemnation and death, and reinstated in his dominion."² This marks a broader appreciation of the context of Romans 5 than had previously been common in Adventist arguments and shows a distinct shift of emphasis.

In 1860 Robbins identified "moral death" with a "state of alienation from God" and a "death in trespasses and sins"—the prevailing view of the first decade. Though his article was a polemic against popular theology of the day, he did define the term.³ An anonymous article of 1863 identified the term in the same manner and argued that the actual death penalty was "dying thou shalt die."⁴ In this article, spiritual death was carefully defined as sin and transgression holding the sinner in its clutches, but the author insisted that such death could not be the penalty threatened Adam. I. D. Van Horn defined the term as "the soul's alienation from God and the losing of

¹"Tithes and Offerings," Bible Students Library, 1 (July 6, 1889), pp. 2-3.

²"The Sabbath School,—The Word of Redemption," RH 70:12 (March 21, 1893):190.

³B. F. Robbins, "Life A Reward," pp. 110-111.

⁴"Genesis ii.17" [taken from Israelite Indeed], RH 21:8 (March 31, 1863):139.

all desire to do good.¹ But again the definition could be misleading if one did not understand it in its context of actual sin. Each of these examples demonstrates the contemporaneous understanding of the term for Adventists. The context was actual sin—death in trespasses, i.e., death in trespassing. One who was spiritually dead was one who lived in a condition of sinful pursuit. And as such, Adventists contended, spiritual death could not be the penalty threatened Adam and Eve.

While the earliest concerns were anthropological, as time went on the Adventist statements show a more decided hamartiological bent. Uriah Smith described man, after the Fall, as having become "obnoxious to his Maker" and "polluted with sin."² A reprint of a number of chapters from Albert Barnes' work on the Atonement emphasized sin as "alienation" and "estrangement"—the basis for man's need of salvation.³ Barnes did not mean by this quite the same as the Adventists did, but his material seemed helpful enough to reprint in the Review and Herald.

In a series of debates between N. V. Hull and R. F. Cottrell, Elder Hull [a non-SDA] identified moral death as "the state of sin in which the race is found, . . . his alienation is a state of death." Cottrell did not deny that man was spiritually or morally dead, but maintained that "it is because his moral condition exposes him to literal death, that he, in a figure, is said to be dead."⁴ Cottrell used the traditional Adventist argument

¹I. D. Van Horn, "Absurdities of Doctrine," RH 45:21 (May 20, 1875):165.

²Uriah Smith, "The Tree of Life," p. 140.

³Albert Barnes, "The Atonement," RH 18:16, 17 (September 17, 24, 1861):122, 129-130.

⁴N. V. Hull and R. F. Cottrell, "Nature and Destiny of Man," RH 28:13 (August 28, 1866):97-98.

to show that this was not the penalty but the effect of his own act. And yet Hull's definition of spiritual death appeared to be acceptable to Cottrell.

The term was further defined by N. Fuller:

To die spiritually would be to lose the favor of God by disobedience. That he lost the favor of God I do not deny; but is this what is meant by "death" in the above text? [1 Corinthians 15:22]¹

In an 1868 article on the law and its relation to the Gospel, R. F. Cottrell referred to condemnation as a "moral disease" of mankind, which if not cured led to death. This disease (the dying nature) was caused by sin and cured by the Gospel. He also called condemnation a "mortal disease" in case anyone wondered whether he meant the dying nature.²

From the standpoint of hamartiology, men and women are "dead" in trespasses, i.e., spiritual death, because their personal transgressing eventuates in literal death.³ This view prevails until the turn of the century:

¹N. Fuller, "The Object of the Gospel," RH 31:17 (April 7, 1868):257-258. The answer is, of course, no. If Paul was speaking of spiritual death, then 1 Cor 15:22 indeed proves universalism, for "all" men would be restored spiritually in Christ. Fuller insisted that such was not the case. What Adam did was to sow the seeds of mortality by eating of the fruit in disobedience to God.

²R. F. Cottrell, "Law and Gospel," RH 32:17 (October 20, 1868):209-210. The bulk of Cottrell's article deals with actual sin. This is characteristic of early approaches for SDAs discerned sin's separation as caused more by personal sin than by original sin. Andrews wrote, "There is but one thing that can separate us from our God and that is sin," and he was referring to personal, actual sin, not Adam's sin ("Random Thoughts," RH 35:26 [June 14, 1870]:205-206). Cf. R. A. Morton, "The Carnal and the Spiritual Man," ST 1:19 (March 18, 1875):151. C. W. Stone emphasized the same thought: "If a man disobeys God, that at once alienates him from God. He is a sinner; that is the consequences, not the punishment. The punishment must come after and outside of all that" ("Is the Soul Immortal—No. 4?" ST 2:34 [August 10, 1876]:269). Stone further argued that Adam separated himself from God by sinning and rendered himself in a state of spiritual death. And in this respect Adam's posterity also creates alienation from God by their "own acts." Ibid.

³See R. F. Cottrell, "Life and Death—Their Meaning," ST 4:37 (October 3, 1878):293.

sin separates from God those who practice it, yet at the same time "the Adamic transgression severed the whole human family from life."¹

In view of this tension between literal and spiritual death in SDA theology, it is a mistake to conclude that the first decade emphasis on personal sin is the only view of sin-as-separation that prevailed. While the traditional view of Storrs, i.e., Adam's sin separated man from life and thrust mankind into deeper separation as each follows Adam's example, there was a soteriological emphasis that began to grow especially from the mid-1870s onward.

The new emphasis appears in embryonic form in Ellen White's writings as early as 1870:

The sin of Adam and Eve caused a fearful separation between God and man. And here Christ steps in between fallen man and God, and says to man, You may yet come to the Father; there is a plan devised through which God can be reconciled to man, and man to God; and through a mediator you can approach God.²

¹William Covert, "Death and Judgment," RH 70:36 (September 5, 1893):561. The bulk of Covert's article is on actual sin and Adam is used only as an example of personal sin. Note for example: "Sin separates those who practice it from God. . . . 'your sins have hid his face from you.'" However, Adam's sin caused a separation for the entire race so far as life was concerned. The severing of the human race resulted in an "irrevokable" death decree that "passed upon the race."

²Ellen G. White, "Christian Recreation," RH 35:24 (May 31, 1870):185-186. Cf. "Redemption—No. 1," RH 43:11 (February 24, 1874):83. Here is the notion of a separated race in which man can no longer resist the temptation of Satan in his own strength. In her articles entitled "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:9, 11 (August 18, September 1, 1874):67, 81, EGW writes [p. 67]: "He [Christ] also knew that it was not possible for man, out of Eden, separated from the light and love of God since the fall, to resist the temptations of Satan in his own strength. . . . He obtains for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam that strength which it is impossible for them to gain for themselves, that in his name they may overcome the temptations of Satan." And again [p. 81]: "In Adam all was lost through transgression. Through Christ was man's only hope of restoration to the favor of God. Man had separated himself at such a distance from God by transgression of his law, that he could not humiliate himself before God proportionate to his grievous sin." Adam's apostasy caused man to lose "the power to govern his own heart" (EGW, Manuscript Release 585, 615 [D-10-1888]). Here was a separation that stimulated man to lift himself up

This theme of separation was developed in such a way that a hamartiology evolved in contrast to, or along side of, the original conditionalist theme of Storrs. J. A. Corliss suggested that "man lost the favor of God by the fall."¹ G. H. Rogers, in 1883, used the same terms but interpreted the loss of God's favor as resulting in death.² O. T. Noble, writing about the importance of baptism, insisted that the change which occurs at baptism is one of "state" or relation, not of the practice of sin.³

In 1888, L. A. Smith, assistant editor of the Review, argued for the moral effects of separation from God: (1) man has three elements, or "parts," physical, mental, and moral; (2) the Fall of Adam affected and "deranged" all three elements; (3) man sins because he is morally deranged; and (4) all mankind are "heirs by nature" of this diseased moral nature.⁴ He concluded that the work of the Gospel is to restore all the faculties of man's being to a state of soundness.⁵

in pride and to transgress the law of his own moral constitution. This moral result was the unavoidable consequence of Adam's sin.

¹J. A. Corliss, "The Grace of God," RH 48:19 (November 9, 1876):147.

²G. H. Rogers, "Does the Gospel Abrogate the Ten Commandments," RH 60:34 (August 21, 1883):531-532.

³O. T. Noble, "Baptism, Its Action, Subjects and Design," RH 64:4 (January 25, 1887):50. One may continue to sin after baptism but repentance has resulted in one's new status before God—no longer aliens or strangers. It is significant that Noble used this argument as a part of his challenge of the legitimacy of pedobaptism.

⁴L. A. Smith, "The Irrational Nature of Man," RH 65:45 (November 13, 1888):715.

⁵See also Uriah Smith, "Our Righteousness," RH 66:24 (June 11, 1889):376-377, where emphasis is given to the natural outcroppings of a person separated from God: "Sin not only broke the union between man and God, but imbued man with a nature such that it must be replaced by a new nature before he can return to the path of obedience; for a carnal mind, the offspring of sin, is not subject to the law of God and cannot be."

By 1889 the loss that mankind sustained in Adam was expressed as the loss of the Spirit of God.

It will not be questioned that man, by transgression, lost the Spirit of God, and a Spirit of enmity against God and his government was planted in his soul. . . . That by the fall, man rendered himself impotent to obey either physical or moral law perfectly is evident from the fact that without the aid of Christ in the plan of salvation, we can no nothing.¹

J. H. Waggoner presented this as a natural state of self-will out of which every act of sin springs. "Hence, all are by nature the children of wrath, because all are aliens, or more properly, in a state of rebellion against the Supreme Ruler of the universe."² Separation therefore caused man to become a selfish, God-denying, and greedy servant of the world.³

In summary, SDAs of this period argued that there should be a clear distinction made between the penalty and the consequence of original sin, i.e., Adam's sin. The penalty must be maintained as literal and eternal death, also called the "second death." Any attempt to spiritualize or temporalize this death was unscriptural. However, as the period draws to a

¹H. A. St. John, "Man," RH 66:27 (July 2, 1889):418: "By transgression he [man] lost the Spirit of God, also the right to the tree of life, and his beautiful home in Eden. Hence he lost his immortality, and probably the hope of angelic exaltation, and rendered himself unable to obey either moral or physical law perfectly."

²J. H. Waggoner, "Justification by Faith," Bible Students' Library 29 (July 19, 1889):20-21. Waggoner suggests that every act has its source in self-will, the natural state, or carnal-mindedness. With the carnal mind or the natural and unchanged heart, man has no future but to sin.

³August Kunz, "Gathered Thoughts on the First Epistle of John (2:9-17)," RH 70:40 (October 10, 1893):642: "When man, through sin, was separated from God, he became selfish and God-denying, a greedy servant of the world and its possessions. Thus those three originally proper motive-powers were debased into three forms of selfishness,—avarice, greediness for transient pleasures, pride and self-will. In order to return again to the original condition of obedience and purity, we must return and give ourselves to God, through his love as it is revealed in Christ, and be cleansed from our sinful nature; in so doing, we will come to hold the world in contempt, as a matter of course, yet without despising any human being nor aught else that God has made."

close there seems to be more willingness to make the connection between Adam's sin and the morally depraved nature. Separation of the race, as caused by Adam's sin, brought with it some deleterious moral effects in the dying nature that ensued. Mankind became doomed to a life of sinning and death—of pain, misery, toil, and finally cessation of life. One must emphasize here, however, that this depravity was not seen as "penalty," but was rather "consequence" of original sin.

The Depraved Nature

Adventists could write of the "wicked heart," or "corrupt nature," from the earliest days.¹ Terms such as "depraved," "impure," "unjust," "native depravity," "human corruption," "the flesh," "native corruption," "innate depravity," "indwelling sin," "fallen nature," etc., were standard descriptions used in the 1860s and onward.²

In an article on the Biblical view of election, J. H. Waggoner³ argued that since all mankind are classified in Scripture as "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3) before any accept Christ as Saviour, the Calvinistic view of unconditional election cannot be a Biblically sound doctrine. Those born outside of Christ are "children of wrath" before they are converted. This

¹E. Goodrich, "Grace Through Unrighteousness," RH 16:19 (September 25, 1860):149. See also above in this study, p. 278, for a summary of the views during the first decade.

²"Can Two Walk Together Except They Be Agreed?" RH 18:25 (November 19, 1861):195; R. F. Cottrell, "The Hidden Church," RH 19:4 (December 24, 1861):29; C. Monroe, "The Prodigal Son—Luke xv.," RH 20:7 (July 15, 1862):49-50; "Counsel for the Soldiers of Jesus," RH 23:4 (December 22, 1863):26-27; D. M. Canright, "Can God Organize Matter to Think?" RH 50:25 (December 20, 1877):196-197; E. R. Jones, "The Law of Sin," RH 66:11 (March 12, 1889):164-165; Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 80.

³J. H. Waggoner, "The Doctrine of Election," RH 30:5 (July 16, 1867):73.

means that they are non-elect before conversion.¹

A variety of terms were used to describe this new nature that man attained when Adam sinned; terms such as "sick" and "debilitated;" "corrupt," "degenerate," "deformed," and "dwarfed," "proud," "selfish," and "cruel."² Such expressions appeared regularly to the end of the century: "tottering wrecks of humanity," "appetite and passion bear sway," "in our lost condition we cannot help ourselves," "we were once formed in the image of God."³

A representative example of SDA argumentation during the earlier days of this period with regard to man's moral derangement due to Adam's sin, is that of J.N. Andrews:

If the image of God has a further meaning then it is fully realised in the fact that man was made with a moral nature capable of distinguishing right from wrong, because God put within man by nature a copy of his law.⁴

Andrews based this notion on Paul's reference to the "law written in their hearts" (Romans 2:13-15). The Fall, he averred, "marred" this inherent law so that sin became a "moral disease," "contagious," "pollution,"

¹Whether Waggoner meant that birth in a state of sin constitutes lostness due to a guilt brought on by Adam's sin he did not clarify since his article was a polemic. But the implication was present regardless, and his argument stood or fell on that implication.

²John Matteson, "The Perfection of the Law of God," RH 30:9 (August 13, 1867):129-132; A. C. Bourdeau, "The Hope That is In You," RH 33:24 (June 8, 1869):185-187; J. N. Andrews, "Envy," RH 34:16 (October 12, 1869):128. Cf. L. A. Smith, "The Nature of Sin," RH 70:25 (June 20, 1893):394. Smith calls sin "leprosy," "poison," "pollution of the soul," "a state of separation."

³William Simpson, "Man's Degeneracy," RH 74:3 (January 19, 1897):36.

⁴J. N. Andrews, "Scripture Facts Concerning Man's Nature and Destiny," RH 43:17 (April 7, 1874):132. Cf. Andrews, "Death, Sin, and the Law," RH 33:9 (February 23, 1869):65.

"infection," "leprosy," "poison," and influence that destroys, benumbs, stains and ruins.¹

Sin is a short word, but it comprehends all unrighteousness. Every crime, every evil deed, every act of wrong-doing of every kind, are all embraced in this great ocean of iniquity. Nor are the acts of man all that there is to sin. These make its existence visible; but it exists in the motives, purposes, and desires of the heart. Here, alas! is the great fountain of evil. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Sin is a disease of universal prevalence. No one born of Adam's race has escaped its terrible infection.²

The work of Christ is to restore what man loses by sin; it is to offer new creaturehood, to "wash white," to remove the stains, spots, and wrinkles of sin.³

The context of Andrews' argumentation is individual rather than corporate responsibility.

The law of God in a mutilated form exists by nature in the hearts of man. . . . What man has by nature in an imperfect condition, in consequence of the fall, he had in his perfection while he was an unfallen being. That is to say, the first man in his innocency had a perfect copy of the law of God upon the heart. This copy of the law in the natural heart is the carnal mind, which is enmity to the law of God.

Conversion is nothing more than the removal of this carnal mind, and the perfect writing of the law of God in the heart. . . . The redeemed will have as perfect a copy of the law upon their hearts as Adam had before the fall.⁴

Man is not held accountable for Adam's actual sin for he had no part in the decision. However, man can escape the penalty of eternal death because of a new probation through which each person must answer to the law himself.⁵ Andrews suggests that the restoring work of the gospel is to

¹J. N. Andrews, "Be Sure Your Sin Will Find You Out," RH 34:17 (October 19, 1869):132.

²Andrews, "Death, Sin, and the Law," p. 65.

³Andrews, "Be Sure Your Sin Will Find You Out," p. 132.

⁴"Death, Sin and the Law," p. 65.

⁵J. N. Andrews, "Our Accountability to God," RH 59:13 (March 28,

eradicate the "evil nature" through the development of character. This nature listens to the devil's suggestions,¹ including such tendencies as jealousy and envy—mean, despicable qualities that go into making up the "carnal mind."² The carnal mind is that evil disposition which men are subject to in a state of nature, or before being truly converted to God.³ To a Calvinist this would be depravity, but Andrews does not use that terminology, and yet, so powerful is this natural or carnal mind that it renders man "incapable of fulfilling" God's law.⁴ Since keeping the law is a requirement for salvation, the "gospel takes away the carnal mind."⁵ In this context Andrews describes the nature of Christ in the incarnation:

1882):200: "We are not responsible for the sin of Adam, nor for the fact that we belong to a fallen race, for these things are not our fault. But the fountain of grace and mercy has been opened to us by the death of our lord Jesus Christ. We are responsible if we neglect to repent of our sins. We are responsible if we neglect the gospel of Christ, and remain in our natural unconverted state. Every sinner is responsible to God for neglecting the great salvation which has been provided. . . . The blood of Christ has power to cleanse the sinner from his guilt, but it will not do it without his co-operation. He must repent, and obey the gospel. It is possible for him to do it to-day, and he is responsible for every day in which he neglects to obey." Cf. Andrews' article, "Natural Immortality," ST 4:46 (December 5, 1878):365, where he maintains that in denying the doctrine of natural immortality SDAs are not denying the doctrine of accountability to God.

¹J. N. Andrews, "The Hardening of the Heart," RH 34:15 (October 5, 1869):116.

²J. N. Andrews, "Jealousy," RH 34:16 (October 12, 1869):124. See by the same author, "Envy," RH 34:16 (October 12, 1869):128.

³J. N. Andrews, "The Righteousness of the Law—Purpose of the Gospel," 33:7 (February 9, 1869):2.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.* "The gospel does not go beyond the law of God, nor does it fall short of it. It does not substitute something else in the place of that perfection which the law demands; but it provides the requisite means for securing that very perfection in us. . . . When this deadly evil was put far from us, then we were to fulfill the righteousness of the law."

He [God] sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin [margin], condemned sin in the flesh. Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but he had no sinful disposition within him. He was subjected to the utmost power of temptation, but he knew no sin. He rendered perfect obedience to the Father's law. Then he took the curse of that law which stood against us upon himself. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He is the great sacrifice for sin. His blood is our effectual sin offering. We can be pardoned for our past transgressions of the law of God, but we must not presume to continue in transgression. His grace can take away our carnal minds and give us strength to obey the commandments of God.¹

The experiential result of the gospel is the subduing of the evil passions through the forming of Christian character by "the aid of God's grace."² Such a character is to "stand the test of the day of judgment."³ "Our character is formed by ourselves," i.e., no one else can create character within us or without our consent, it is done in "cooperation with God."

We form our characters little by little like the growth of an icicle. Drop by drop this forms. One drop of dirty water will make itself appear in the form of the icicle. One evil thought, one wicked word, will enter into, and help form our character.⁴

While all of this is related to original sin, Adam's posterity suffers it more by imitatio than by physical inheritance, for it is not sin or guilt that the head of the race passes on to his children but simply death, and a dying nature.⁵

In Milton's words, death is "the child of sin."⁶ Death is the returning of man to dust and the very day of Adam's sin mankind received the sentence: a dying nature. But Andrews, while he concedes this standard

¹Ibid., Emphasis supplied.

²J. N. Andrews, "Character," RH 35:21 (May 10, 1870):164.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵J. N. Andrews, "Institution of the Sabbath," p. 10.

⁶"The Return of the Spirit of God," p. 1: "Milton's idea that death is the child of sin and Satan, is strictly true."

conditionalist interpretation goes beyond and asserts, "to my mind, the law refers rather to the fact that the sentence of death was that day made irrevocable, than to the fact that it was actually executed."¹

But Andrews' view still stops short of viewing depravity as properly called sin so as to include man's responsibility or guilt for Adam's sin. It is death that Adam passes on to his posterity, the rest one picks up by imitatio. The carnal nature is a disposition to sin acquired by sinning. Christ did not have this disposition simply because he did not sin.

Other early authors went little farther than Andrews. James White taught that all Adam's posterity inherit a sinful nature from their primeval father but explained that it is Satan's promptings that lead the "sinner" to commit sin: "The poor sinner, then, bears the double burden of his sinful nature, and the condemnation of actual transgression."² Mankind lost three

¹J. N. Andrews, "Brief Thoughts Concerning Life and Death," ST 2:34 (August 10, 1876):269. Cf. J. N. Andrews, "Paradise," RH 33:18 (April 27, 1869):138: "The law did not mean that he [Adam] should surely die the day that he committed the transgression, though it would seem most natural to imply this. Evidently it did mean just this: that the very day that he would commit the act, his death should be made certain and inevitable. . . . That the death of Adam was made certain in the very day of his transgression, gives us a reasonable and common-sense view of the law, and one which exactly tallies with the sentence of the Judge." This was not original with Andrews. Storrs had argued the same point (see above in this study, p. 220).

²James White, "God is Light," RH 41:4 (January 7, 1873):25-26. "In Adam all inherit a sinful nature, which, being prompted by Satan, leads the sinner to commit sin. The poor sinner, then, bears the double burden of his sinful nature, and the condemnation of actual transgression. In the plan of redemption, the blood of Jesus Christ was to be shed that the believing sinner might find pardon from actual transgression, and be cleansed from all unrighteousness." Compare this view to the Federal view of original sin which held that Adam was the federal head on two counts: as natural father and as representative. See above in this study, pp. 175-177. White continues: "The young disciple very soon finds that he still has a sinful nature to contend with, which brings him into condemnation. Satan tempts him, and through the weakness of his nature he yields, more or less, to his suggestions, and is brought into condemnation." See further James White, "The Millennium," RH 55:6 (February 5, 1880):82-83.

possessions "in Adam" at the Fall:¹ (1) His innocence and purity of character;² (2) His hold on immortal life;³ and (3) His dominion of the earth.⁴ On the first notion, innocence and character, White expounds that "in" Adam's sin man became carnal.⁵ To be carnal meant to be condemned and to practice sin.

Ellen White described fallen man as "naturally inclined to follow Satan's suggestions" and unable to find victory over Satan outside of Christ.⁶ She understood depravity in terms of inherent "moral derangement."⁷ Sinning

¹In his articles on "The Kingdom of God," in 1854 (see above in this study, pp. 246-247), White had delineated only two (the latter two given here). The first of man's losses, i.e., innocence, is now given prominence, perhaps indicating a move from a stress on anthropology to one on soteriology.

²James White, The Redeemer and Redeemed; or, The Plan of Redemption Through Christ (Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1877), pp. 3-11. Cf. James White, "The Spirit of Prophecy," RH 35:5 (January 25, 1870):36: "Man fell from his moral rectitude, and innocency, and was driven from the garden, from the tree of life, and from the visible presence of the Lord and his holy angels. Moral darkness, like the pall of death, has since cast its shadows everywhere, and everywhere the blight and mildew of sin has been seen."

³Redeemed and Redeemer, pp. 12-19.

⁴Ibid., p. 3.

⁵Ibid., pp. 29-48.

⁶Ellen G. White, "The Power of Satan," RH 19:24 (May 13, 1862):186-187. Cf. Ellen G. White, "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:8, 9 (August 4, 1874):58, 67.

⁷Ellen G. White, Letter 26d, 1887, reprinted in EGW, In Heavenly Places (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1967), p. 196: "The moral dangers to which all, both old and young, are exposed are daily increasing. Moral derangement, which we call depravity, finds ample room to work, and an influence is exerted by men, women, and youth professing to be Christians that is low, sensual, devilish. . . ." A few of EGW's statements from this period will add perspective: Letter 26d, 1887, reprinted in ibid., p. 195: "Bad habits are more easily formed than good habits, and the bad habits are given up with more difficulty. The natural depravity of the heart accounts for this well-known fact—that it takes far less labor to demoralize the youth, to corrupt their ideas of moral and religious character, than to engraft upon their character the enduring, pure, and uncorrupted habits of righteousness and truth. . . . In our present fallen state all that is needed is to give up the mind and character to its natural tendencies."

caused Adam and Eve to "become depraved," a state in which they had "lessened their strength to resist evil," and Satan could gain more ready access to them.¹

Uriah Smith made a distinction between sin and sinfulness, the latter being "the temper or disposition of mind that leads to such violation."²

D. T. Bourdeau insisted that the sinfulness of sin must be impressed on people's minds to demonstrate the need for Christ's righteousness,³ and maintained that we were born "in sin."⁴ A clear distinction is that made by E. Goodrich:

As to the doctrine of total depravity, it is certainly a Bible doctrine; but that all men are born totally depraved, and that even infants that die, at once go to hell (a place of torment), is most certainly not a Bible sentiment; because this would place man at the very lowest point of moral degradation; he could get no lower by sinning, and it would be folly to talk of curing such a one; for there is nothing to cure. It is sin that depraves, and the history of sin is the history of depravity; for depravity is but the progressive development of sin and its ravages upon the moral man. Every

Letter 8, 1895, reprinted in Nichol, ed., SDA Bible Commentary, 5:1128: "Because of sin his [Adam's] posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience." In this statement she insisted this was something Jesus did not have. "The Warfare between Good and Evil," RH 78:16 (April 16, 1901):241: "At its very source human nature was corrupted. And ever since then sin has continued its hateful work, reaching from mind to mind. Every sin committed awakens the echoes of the original sin." Education [1903], p. 29: "There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist."

¹Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 61.

²Uriah Smith, "The Sinner and His Sins," RH 68:6 (February 10, 1891):88.

³D. T. Bourdeau, "Do They Teach Conversion and Sanctification?" RH 67:6 (February 11, 1890):83-84.

⁴D. T. Bourdeau, "The Latter Rain," RH 67:21 (May 27, 1890):323-324. Referring to Elijah, Bourdeau wrote: "Elijah was subject to like passions as we are. James 5:17. He was born in sin just as we were born in sin; he had by nature the same frailties and imperfections that we have; yet as he, by the grace of God, became a partaker of the divine nature, he was favored with wonderful manifestations of the Spirit of God."

sin and every iniquity committed and every truth rejected, is a lesson in total depravity.¹

Goodrich, while he uses the terms popular in Federal theology, clearly has a more New Haven or Arminian view of depravity and its effects on the person. He represents a denial of the Calvinistic use of the term and presents a reinterpretation of it.

D. M. Canright held that the death penalty was invoked by God through deprivation of the tree; therefore, man inherits from Adam this exclusion from the tree of life and the dying nature that results.² Canright was not adverse to using the term "depravity," and described what the finally saved have overcome to achieve salvation: infirmities, natural sinfulness and propensities that lead away from God.³ Canright was con-

¹E. Goodrich, "Sin and Its Results, RH 43:5 (January 13, 1874):33-34.

²D. M. Canright, "What Is Immortality?" RH 25:19 (April 11, 1865):149. Canright reasons that as a tree cut at its trunk begins to die, so Adam and his posterity began to die when they were "cut" from the tree of life. They were "utterly ruined" by death and cease to exist. Cf. "Faith and Works," RH 27:19 (April 11, 1865):149. The answer to mortality lies in the work of Christ to win back, for man, the right to the tree of life ("What Is Immortality?" p. 149). When Adam and Eve sinned they became "corrupted" and "many of her children would be so corrupt that God could not save them" ["The Object of Creation," RH 39:19 (April 23, 1872):146]. This corruption was caused because in the act of Eve was condensed every transgression of the moral law: she coveted, stole, disobeyed her father, worshiped the serpent, etc. See Canright, The Two Laws (Battle Creek: SDA Publishing Assn., 1882), p. 7.

³D. M. Canright, "If Satan Sinned in Heaven, May Not Others Also?" RH 37:5 (January 17, 1871):37: "Only those who have withstood all temptation, overcome all their sins, and lived righteously before God [will be saved]. But this they did under the most trying circumstances. They were full of infirmities themselves, weak and naturally sinful, with propensities tending to lead them away from God; all the influence of the world brought to bear against them; the powerful temptations of the devil and his angels, continually causing them doubts and fears; and yet under all these circumstances, they succeeded in overcoming their sins, and living holy and righteous lives before God."

sistent in his presentations of depravity as another manifestation of the carnal mind.¹

"Sinful propensities" were also involved in this nature that mankind inherited from Adam. Natural inclinations to sin resided in the unconverted heart of man.² They were part of the "old man" of sin about whom Paul wrote. These propensities tended to lead one away from God. And they demonstrate themselves as soon as one begins to display responsible behavior. Self is at the heart of such propensities.³ It is at this point that a great

¹At one point Canright restates the argument of John Milton: "From whence comes the immortal spirit? . . . Shall we say, then, that souls are created for bodies at birth? This theory would involve a greater difficulty than the other [pre-existence theory]. The Lord must be continually creating, every minute, additional immortal souls. More than that, this would make him sanction prostitution and adultery. A child is begotten in adultery, in the most wicked and corrupt manner. Must God immediately create a soul for that child? This would make God a party to sin. Moreover, if God thus creates immaterial souls, he must either make them pure and holy, or impure and sinful. The latter supposition is inconsistent with the character of God; and if the former be the true one, how shall we account for the natural depravity of the human soul? The evidence of our eyes proves that children are predisposed to sin, some of them much more so than others." "Can God Organize Matter to Think?" p. 196. Compare Canright's articles: "Thoughts about Conversion," RH 34:19 (November 2, 1869):149; "Romans VII," RH 34:25 (December 14, 1869):194-195; "The New Jerusalem," p. 118.

²An anonymous "Note" in RH 16:19 (September 25, 1860):152, reads, "The propensity and inclination to sin which exists in the natural heart of man, is shown in the very wording of the ten commandments. Our rule of life is given us as an instrument of restraint. Nearly all its particular precepts are put in the negative form--'thou shalt not,' &c., showing that we are naturally inclined to do those things which God sees it necessary to prohibit."

³While propensities are called "sinful" on a number of occasions, the pre-1888 SDA writers do not demonstrate with convincing clarity that they understood propensities to be properly called sin. They place too much emphasis on the importance of man's will and responsibility to conclude this. Note the following representative examples of their expressions:

(1) Uriah Smith, "The Old Man," RH 34:4 (July 20, 1869):29-30: "This [term "old man"] is but another term for the carnal mind, and signifies our fallen nature. It is that self which gives us so much trouble, and which must die or it will be our ruin. In Rom. vi.6, Paul calls the old man, 'the

body of sin,' a most expressive designation for our evil nature. What a term, 'the body of sin. . . Here is the body of sin, or old man, and here are the members of that body. This is the carnal mind that is enmity against God, and that is not subject to his law, and cannot be. God's law forbids the existence of such a nature, and refuses to tolerate it for a moment. And this evil heart of sin has not one particle of submission to the law. There is no chance for peace between them. This evil nature must die. Everything pertaining to it is wrong. It has no right to exist. This is why we must have it crucified. . . . We must die to sin or we shall inevitably die on account of it."

(2) D. M. Canright, "If Satan Sinned in Heaven," p. 37: "Who will be saved in Heaven? Only those who have withstood all temptations, overcome all their sins, and lived righteously before God. . . . They were full of infirmities themselves, weak and naturally sinful, with propensities tending to lead them away from God; all the influence of the world brought to bear against them; the powerful temptations of the devil and his angels, continually causing them doubts and fears; and yet under all these circumstances, they succeeded in overcoming their sins, and living holy and righteous lives before God."

(3) John I. Collins, "Conversion," RH 56:17 (October 21, 1880):259: "We find that all our natural tendencies are downward. It is easier to do wrong than to do right. We are sinners by nature. (Ps. 51:5). As soon as we begin to act in their world, our evil propensities begin to show themselves; we start on the downward road, and unless we turn we shall go to ruin. Therefore God says, 'Turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?' Eze. 33:11."

(4) H. Wren, "The Work and People of Satan," RH 63:6 (February 9, 1886):83-84: "The carnal mind, in its full sense, is the sum total of all dislikes to God and aversions to his law, existing in any given individual, or in the entire race of aliens from God. The one sovereign carnal mind that possesses all the dislikes to God and his law, of every individual, and of the entire race, as manifested in any age, or in all ages of the world, is Satan. . . . He possesses all the evil talents, or carnal-mindedness, of the entire race of man. . . . A reprobate mind is a mind of which God cannot approve, and is simply the carnal mind insisted upon by those who possess it."

(5) R. A. Underwood, "Thou Shall Not Covet," RH 60:28 (July 10, 1883):435: "Selfishness is the root that develops all the fruits of the carnal mind. Every sin that has marred our world can be traced to this most-to-be-feared germ. . . . In view of the ruin already seen, it must be obvious that the great want of fallen man is a divine remedy for selfishness, the epidemic disease of our nature."

(6) M. C. Wilcox, "Selfishness," RH 60:29 (July 17, 1883):457: "The root of all these sins is deeply grounded in our nature, deep in the carnal heart, the sin of all sins, because the beginnings of all--selfishness. . . . 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' Jas. 1:14. The devil is the 'enticer,' but he entices by drawing on the selfish lusts, desires and longings, of the human heart. Were there nothing of evil cherished within our hearts, there would be no affinity with the kind of evil."

To classify these statements with respect to the two schools of thought popular in New England at the time, compare:

(1) Westminster Confession (Calvinist orthodoxy): "The guilt of this

of discussion occurs with regard to the interpretation of Ellen G. White on the subject.¹

sin [Adam's sin] was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. . . . This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal" (ibid. 6.3-6 [Leith, 201-202]).

(2) New Haven theology (Nathaniel Taylor): "When . . . I say that mankind are entirely depraved by nature, I do not mean that their nature is itself sinful, nor that their nature is the physical or efficient cause of their sinning; but I mean that their nature is the occasion, or reason of their sinning—that such is their nature, that in all the appropriate circumstances of their being, they will sin and only sin. . . . When the Apostle asserts, that mankind are by nature sinners, he must mean simply that such is their nature that uniformly in all the appropriate circumstances of their being, they will sin" (Concio ad Clerum 2 [Ahlstrom, Theology in America, p. 224]).

¹In her 1892 work, Steps to Christ, EGW wrote: "It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen, and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us." (p. 62). The question can be raised concerning the causal relationship intended here between Adam and his posterity or between depravity and actual sin. Is one to understand this as meaning (1) mankind is sinful (sinners), and therefore unable to keep the law? or (2) mankind is inherently unable to obey and therefore sinful. In the context of contemporaries it seems clear that she is saying that to be sinful is to be depraved but not guilty in Adam., i.e., depravity is not properly called sin. Thus the statement would mean, "Man, in consequence of Adam's sin, is depraved and thus unable to keep the law in his own power, but this is not to say that man is guilty before he sins." Such a view would preserve the capacity for response without allowing for a Pelagian understanding of free-will.

A second example includes two statements concerning propensities: First: "The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience" (Letter 8, 1895, reprinted in Nichol, ed., SDA Bible Commentary, 5:1128, emphasis supplied). Second: "Children inherit inclinations to wrong, but they also have many lovely traits of character. These should be strengthened and developed, while the tendencies to evil should be carefully guarded against and repressed" ["The Mother's Work," RH 84:4 (January 24, 1907):8, emphasis supplied]. In the former

Sinful propensities, in the New Haven tradition, could be strong impulses, inherited bent, even depravity, without being properly considered sin from the standpoint of Federal Theology. In this setting an SDA could refer to the inclination to sin as "pollution" and insist that the "minimum

statement, how literally should one take the use of the preposition "of"? Does EGW mean it in an appositive sense? For example, what are "inherent propensities of disobedience? Do they differ from "inclinations to wrong" or "tendencies to evil?" The former, read through Westminster eyes, would make the inherent propensities properly called sin, the latter could thus be read through New Haven eyes and kept separate of properly called sin.

This undoubtedly accounts for the disagreement represented by two contemporary schools of Adventist thought on the subject. For example, in his article in Ministry, October 1970, "Outline Studies on Christian Perfection and Original Sin," p. 27, Robert W. Olson interprets Ellen White as teaching original guilt. First, Olson identifies the teaching of Scripture and summarizes: "Note the results of Adam's sin insofar as it pertains to us: (1) we were made sinners, (2) we must die, and (3) we are basically evil and are not able to do the things we please." Then he summarizes EGW's teaching on the subject: "Mrs. White's comments are in perfect harmony with the Bible but they are given in much greater detail. Adam's sin is said to affect us in the same three ways: (1) we are born in a state of guilt inherited from Adam, (2) we must die as a consequence of this condition, and (3) we are born with natural tendencies to evil." He further comments that, according to EGW, "we inherit guilt from Adam so that even a baby that dies a day after birth needs a saviour though the child never committed a sin of its own. There will be children taken to heaven who died before the age of accountability (Selected Mesages, Book 1, p. 160), but they do not deserve this reward. Their entrance into the kingdom is based entirely on the merits of Jesus. They never sinned but they inherited a state of guilt from Adam, and so need a Saviour." This position is denied by A. Leroy Moore, who has analyzed the various EGW statements in the face of what he calls the "Reformationist" challenge to the church. See The Theology Crisis, pp. 112ff.

Note in this context, EGW's depiction of the effects of Adam's sin in her largely circulated book, Patriarchs and Prophets [1890], p. 61: "The sin of our first parents brought guilt and sorrow upon the world, and had it not been for the goodness and mercy of God, would have plunged the race into hopeless despair; . . . They [Adam and Eve] were told that their nature had become depraved by sin; they had lessened their strength to resist evil, and had opened the way for Satan to gain more ready access to them. In their innocence they had yielded to temptation; and now, in a state of conscious guilt, they would have less power to maintain their integrity"; p. 63: "It was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up his Son to die for the guilty race"; p. 64: "By repentance toward God and faith in Christ, the fallen children of Adam might once more become 'sons of God'; p. 64: "Man had become so degraded by sin that it was impossible for him, in himself, to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and goodness."

of salvation" was being saved from sinning and the maximum of salvation "was being saved from pollution—the inclination to sin."¹

After 1888 the statements of Adventism began to take a decided shift toward pointed soteriological concerns. Man is depicted as having no hope and without God,² as partaking of Adam's fallen nature,³ as being born spiritually blind and condemned by God,⁴ "conceived in sin" and as one who gratifies "those passions and propensities that spring from a corrupt nature."⁵ Man's emotions were considered "by nature all selfish and sinful."⁶ By 1892 the Sabbath School lessons were calling the mortal flesh "essentially depraved," and commented that Ps 51:5 was emphasizing "not only the enormity of his [man's] particular sin, but the inherent depravity of the

¹D. E. Lindsey, "The Goodness of God," RH 73:20 (May 19, 1896):307.

²A. S. Hutchins, "Perfection," RH 65:36 (September 4, 1888):562-563.

³"Sabbath School Lessons on the Letter to the Hebrews" (Oakland: International Sabbath School Assn., 1889), p. 11. Cf. J. H. Waggoner, From Eden to Eden, p. 18.

⁴E. Hilliard, "Christ's Forbearance with Sinners," RH 67:33 (August 26, 1890):514.

⁵William T. Case, "The Cross of Christ," RH 67:33 (August 26, 1890):514: "By the term 'world,' we are to understand, all the sinful propensities and desires of the carnal nature, all allurements and pleasures, all lusts and passions that are so attractive to the unsanctified heart. We are to die unto them and they are to die unto us. We all by nature love sin and hate holiness. Conceived in sin, born in sin, man loves the chain that binds him. He fondly imagines that he is pursuing the greatest good and seeking the highest happiness, in gratifying those passions and propensities that spring from a corrupt nature."

⁶E. Hilliard, "Faith or Feeling," RH 68:29 (July 21, 1891):452. Cf. G. W. Draper, "Holiness," RH 68:31 (August 4, 1891):482; Ellen G. White, Testimonies, 5:645; Ellen G. White, "Peace in Christ," RH 64:47 (November 29, 1887):1: "There is wrestling with inbred sin; there is warfare against outward wrong." E. R. Jones saw "inbred sin" as a "tyrant" that was "implanted" by Adam's disobedience. "The Law of Sin," RH 66:11 (March 12, 1889):164-165.

natural man."¹ It was from this evil heart that all sins awaited birth in action.²

One writer who made a firm distinction between "acts of transgression" and "indwelling sin" was E. R. Jones, an Adventist minister from Healdsburg, California [1889]. He saw Paul referring to innate depravity or the carnal nature when he spoke of the "sin that dwelleth in me." Such a nature was the "lamentable inheritance by every soul born upon this earth from our common father Adam." When Adam sinned he sold his posterity to Satan who "planted in him that carnal nature." This became man's natural sinful state. It is born in man; it is a "principle of inwrought rebellion toward God;" it is "inbred sin."³ In an article written the next year [1890], Jones took a strong stand for inherited depravity:

"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Rom. 5:19. None will deny that this refers to the inherited depravity, the sinful nature and tendency in which, through his disobedience, every single soul of Adam's race is born.⁴

¹"Lessons from the Old Testament," RH 69:16 (April 19, 1892):254.

²M. E. Kellogg, "The Remedy for Evil," RH 71:31 (July 31, 1894):489. Cf. G. K. Owen, "The Law of Sin; Or the Two Laws," RH 69:26 (June 28, 1892):402; M. C. Wilcox, Justification; Regeneration; Sanctification (Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1891), pp. 4-5, 8-9. Wilcox writes [p. 8]: "What is the reason of this continual sinning? Why is it that the individual does not keep his promise to the Lord to sin no more in that direction? For this reason: The sinner has looked only at the individual sins, and not at his nature, of which the sins are an outgrowth. He has sinned, and his sins have brought shame, humiliation, sore trials, and evil consequences. He has come to hate those sins because of this. He has gone in his search no deeper than the sins. He has not looked beyond to the carnal heart, which is enmity against God, of which the individual sins are only the natural fruit. . . . He loves to think the thoughts of the carnal mind, and wishes the deeds that are sinful were not sinful, so that he might indulge in them. . . . The deceitfulness of the sinful nature blinds them. . . . Just as long as our nature remains unchanged, just as long as the carnal hearts holds sway, just so long man will fall into sin" (pp. 8-9). Wilcox proceeds to show that "sin is inherent, a part of his very nature" (p. 11).

³E. R. Jones, "The Law of Sin," pp. 164-165.

⁴E. R. Jones, "In the Flesh," RH 67:1 (January 7, 1890):2.

J. H. Cook described man's loss in Adam in terms roughly equivalent to deprivation and depravation: (1) Man lost his life, his "divine nature," and his will power for good, and (2) Man became a servant of Satan, a child of the devil, and the possessor of a "satanic nature."¹

In the fall of man he has lost his divine nature given him in creation, and . . . he has become sinful, so that there is none good, no, not one. . . . *What a terrible condition of human depravity is here given!*²

The language of the 1890s took a decided turn toward a more radical expression of original sin than in previous decades. F. J. Hutchins described Adam's legacy in what could be considered Reformation terminology:

First, Adam lost his innocence and left us sinful; second, he lost his dominion, and left us homeless, without an inheritance, third, he lost his life, and left us dying, our life forfeited, and only a process of time required to demonstrate the fact by the power of death.³

This view suggested that Adam's legacy was not simply physical deprivation but spiritual depravity as well. L. A. Smith described sin as "not an act, but a condition of the heart," and insisted that every act is the result of that condition—"a state of separation from God."⁴ By 1894, M. E. Kellogg could suggest that it was Adam's sin that left man with a "sinful nature which made him subject to the second death—eternal death."⁵

¹J. H. Cook, "Necessity of the New Birth," RH 67:2 (January 14, 1890):18.

²*Ibid.*

³F. J. Hutchins, "The True Object of Life," RH 69:7 (February 16, 1892):98.

⁴L. A. Smith, "The Nature of Sin," RH 70:25 (June 20, 1893):394. cf. W. H. Falconer, "The Source of Defilement," RH 71:48 (December 4, 1894):755; A. T. Jones, "Who Shall Be Glorified?" RH 73:37 (September 15, 1896):588-589.

⁵M. E. Kellogg, "Life from the Dead," RH 71:42 (October 23, 1894):

And G. C. Tenney emphasized the physical and spiritual effects of radical sin.¹

Tenney's vivid descriptions of fallen human nature during his term as coeditor of the Review and Herald (1895-1897) underscore the move toward a clearer expression of the radical nature of sin. Tenney defined human nature as "the natural disposition and tendencies of human life," emphasizing its spiritual poverty.² He described such a nature in the following way: (1) it was the offspring or product of satanic nature; (2) it was prevalent evil in the human heart; (3) it was devoid of good; (4) it included bad impulses, groveling and debasing; (5) it included no good thing; and (6) it was only able to produce artificial, superficial veneer of etiquette, education, and politeness. He concluded in these words:

Some may think that these views are altogether misanthropic and pessimistic, but we believe that they are well supported both by Scripture and by our own observations. Human nature is essentially earthly, sensual, devilish. . . . Human nature is altogether out of place in a Christian. What we possess of it is just so much of Satan in us.³

644-645. Emphasis supplied. See further M. E. Kellogg, "A Second Probation," RH 75:13 (March 29, 1898):198-199.

¹G. C. Tenney, "Christ the Resurrection," RH 73:22 (June 2, 1896):344: "Through sin, death had passed upon all men. The virus of evil quickly permeated human nature, and among mankind none escaped its deadly influence. Its effects are exerted upon both the spiritual and the physical nature. Sin in the heart paralyzes every good impulse. In our natural state we are dead in trespasses and sin. One in such a condition can no more respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit than can a dead man respond to the call of his friends. The hopelessness of one state is no more complete than that of the other. The natural heart cannot hear the voice of the Spirit; it cannot see beauty in the things of God; it cannot taste the love of Christ, it cannot feel the weight of sin nor the joy of pardoning love. . . . This state of spiritual death into which men have fallen is the sure antecedent of physical death, and finally of total extinction."

²G. C. Tenney, "Human Nature," RH 74:13 (March 30, 1897):202-203.

³Ibid. At this point Tenney was quick to make a distinction between Christ and the human nature of Adam's race as he evidently perceived the consequences of identifying any nature Christ would have taken

However, in spite of this turn in hamartiology and the implications it had for soteriology, the old traditional view of Storrs persisted when the anthropological presentations were made.¹ C. P. Whitford clearly separated original sin [Adam's transgression] (which resulted in death) from actual sin (which results in personal condemnation).² And Uriah Smith continued through until his death (1903) to reiterate and repeat the view that Storrs had introduced sixty years before.³

The Nature of Christ as a Clue to Meaning of "Sinful"

The question of the nature of Christ gives a final clue concerning how radically original sin (in the form of depravity or propensities) was considered by early Adventists. The moral nature of Christ was an issue in

with that of "satanic" qualities: "Christ could say that the prince of this world had nothing in him because his humanity was entirely swallowed up in his devotion to the Father's will." These same sentiments, though not quite so extremely described are suggested in the Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly of August 1, 1896. See Lesson V: "The New Birth," third Quarter, "The Gospel of John," pp. 16-17.

¹"Life in Christ and the Saints' Inheritance," International Sabbath School Quarterly, Second Quarter (April 25, 1896):12: "The work of Christ in redemption is, in the Scriptures, interwoven with the history of the sin of man in Paradise. The doctrine of the first and second Adam constitutes the mystery of the Gospel. 1 Corinthians 15. Christ in His teachings, makes clear references to the history of the fall of man as the basis of God's dealings with the human race. . . . By giving a history of the first Adam at creation, Christ forever fixes the meaning of death, and the gift of eternal life. Christ appeared 'to abolish death,' and the death which He abolished was the death that came into the world by the original sin (Rom. 5:12), and through the temptation of the original murderer. death is the absence of life. There could be no such thing as a second death unless the death pronounced upon the human family on account of Adam's transgression be abolished. This Christ did by giving His own life for the release of all. This makes death but a sleep, with the assurance of awakening in the morning."

²C. P. Whitford, "The Fall of Man," RH 73:5 (February 4, 1896):68.

³See for examples, Uriah Smith, "All Made Righteous," RH 68:5 (February 3, 1891):72-73; idem, "The Resurrection of the Wicked," RH 70:27 (July 4, 1893):434.

the 1888 discussions on righteousness by faith, and the topic became more and more prevalent in the 1890s.¹

In 1860 E. Goodrich elucidated the view that Christ, by inheriting man's nature, was subject to "the law of sin and death." Goodrich asserted that Jesus "inherited our nature with its sinful susceptibilities and promptings," and as such could feel the tempter's power. It was thus that Christ could be tempted in "all points as we are."² However, Goodrich was quick to qualify this rather extreme sounding expression by insisting that Jesus did not sin and that the "sinful" nature is to be understood as synonymous with the "dying" nature. For him these qualifications solved any potential suggestion that Jesus might be disqualified to be Savior.

G. I. Butler saw this view as essential to Christ's mission, for the Lord must have a perfect knowledge and understanding of man in his lost and fallen condition.³ In 1869 J. N. Andrews emphasized that while Jesus

¹This is not to conclude that the issue was not discussed before 1888. This survey of the period is to discover how the SDAs understood "sinful nature," rather than to present a history of the Christological concept. Original sin is a notion that is interrelated with the person of Christ as the study of historical theology above has shown. SDAs were not to be exempt from wrestling with the issue of how Christ was to be related to sin.

²E. Goodrich, "Grace Through Unrighteousness," RH 16:19 (September 25, 1860):149. Emphasis supplied. Conversion demands a complete change of nature, Goodrich writes, and the "necessity, consistency and beauty of such a reformation as this, is the better seen and realized when we remember that a dying nature and a sinful nature are identical. To be delivered from one is to be freed from the other." Christ "died unto sin; not that Christ ever sinned, or that guile was ever found in his mouth; but as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, and he also likewise took part of the same, he inherited a part of our nature, subject as it was to the law of sin and death. And having inherited our nature with its sinful susceptibilities and promptings, he could feel the power of the tempter, yea, be in all points tempted as we are." In this state he could empathize and help humanity as its High Priest. Goodrich is concerned that his readers understand that Christ inherited a "part" of human nature that is able to feel the power of sin.

³G. I. Butler, "The Grace of Humility," RH 31:15 (March 24, 1868):224-227.

came in the likeness of sinful flesh "he had no sinful disposition within him"— he "was subjected to the utmost power of temptation, but he knew no sin."¹ That same year Ellen White wrote:

Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the strong divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world.²

Like her early contemporaries Ellen White recognized the need to maintain Christ as Savior while at the same time expressing the truth of Christ as a fit example for struggling mankind: "If he had not been without spot or stain of sin, he could not have been the Savior of mankind."³ In fairness to the pioneers, one must recognize their deep desire to use theology in its practical and helpful role of encouragement and unification.

In 1888, G. W. Morse was confronted with a serious question sent in by a reader of the Review and Herald:

If Christ did not possess our carnal nature or evil passions (see John 14:30), how could he have been tempted in all points as we are? Heb. 5:51 [sic]. As the carnal nature comes from Satan, if Christ possessed it, could he have truthfully said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me"? E.R.J.⁴

Morse's answer is insightful in view of the fact that it is issued on the eve of the new emphasis on righteousness by faith. He quotes Albert

¹J. N. Andrews, "The Righteousness of the Law—the Purpose of the Gospel," RH 33:7 (February 9, 1869):49-50.

²Ellen G. White, Testimonies [1869], 2:201-202.

³Manuscript 164, 1898 (EGW Estate Release 347:5).

⁴G. W. Morse, "Scripture Questions," RH 65:35 (August 28, 1888):554.

Barnes' comments on John 14:30 for part of his answer: (1) temptation derives its power from the principles of evil within man; (2) Christ had no such principles of evil ("propensities"); therefore, (3) temptation had no power with Christ. Then he set forth his own understanding: (1) Christ started from the same point as Adam: no taint of sin, the same manner of appetites, the same susceptibility to being overcome through them, but (2) from a "physical standpoint" he also has our susceptibilities to physical and mental sufferings—labor tired him, fasting caused hunger. His victory was both internal and external—he thought no sin, he did not sin. (3) The tempter's "solicitations" to Christ were as they are with us.

The only point of difference between his opportunity and ours, for resisting temptations, is found in the fact that he possessed no natural trait of, or tendency to, sin, whereas we do. It must be borne in mind that Christ came to this earth to start from the standpoint that Adam did, and not from our stand-point, only in so far as has been mentioned.¹

In the various SDA presentations on Christ's nature that would arise, different stresses might surface but there were also mutual concerns that all SDA writers sought to maintain (as this study shows). The early expression of Adventism represented in Morse coincides with the expressions of Ellen White on the subject. Particularly is this true of her later counsels.²

¹Ibid. Emphasis supplied.

²In addition to Ellen White's statements below, see "Christ Our Hope," RH 69:50 (December 20, 1892):785-786. Cf. Letter 97, 1898 (EGW Estate Release 286:3): "He was born without a taint of sin, but came into the world in like manner as the human family. He did not have a mere semblance of a body, but he took human nature, participating in the life of humanity;" and Manuscript 164, 1898 (EGW Estate Release 347:5): "The Lord Jesus Christ took upon him the form of sinful man, clothing his divinity with humanity. But he was holy, even as God is holy. If he had not been without spot or stain of sin, he could not have been the Savior of mankind. He was the Sin-bearer, needing no atonement. One with God in purity and holiness of character, he could make propitiation for the sins of the whole world." Cf. the large collection of EGW quotations on this subject in Nichol, ed., SDA Bible Commentary, 7A:647-660.

For the pioneers the recapitulation motif of salvation seemed most helpful in expressing their understanding of Christ and maintaining the tensions involved.

Christ is called the second Adam. In purity and holiness, connected with God and beloved by God, He began where the first Adam began. Willingly He passed over the ground where Adam fell, and redeemed man's failure.¹

Here the tension between Christ as Savior and Christ as Example could be adequately maintained. Interestingly, here too the tension could be maintained relative to the truths of justification and sanctification and the objective and subjective aspects of the Atonement.

After 1888 there was a great deal of expression on this subject. Much emphasis was put on Christ's leading of a perfect life "while in sinful flesh" (Rom 8:3; Heb 2:16-17). He lived man's life but did so "without sin." Whatever he took could not be properly called sin unless it be considered vicarious or by imputation. William Covert commented:

He [Christ] must be like his brethren in all points as to flesh and temptation, and yet live without sin. In the flesh he must be weak as they, and yet in obedience he must meet the full requirement of the law. He must know the power of sin, and yet be infinitely righteous, in order to be to man and for man all that was required, and at the same time forever settle the great question under controversy.²

¹Ellen G. White, "The Second Adam," Bible Echo 4:2 (January 9, 1899):18. Cf. James White, "Grace and Glory," RH 43:9 (February 16, 1874):65-66.

²William Covert, "The Victory of Christ," RH 73:2 (January 14, 1896):18. See further, A. T. Jones, "'Be of Good Cheer,'" RH 73:7 (February 18, 1896):104-105. W. W. Prescott, "The Christ of Judea," RH 73:10, 11 (March 10, 17, 1896):152-153, 168-169. Prescott attempted to maintain the Christ-Adam typology of Paul while at the same time keeping Christ as a viable example for man to follow. He referred to Christ as the ladder connecting sinless divinity with sinful humanity. He wrote: "Jesus Christ took the same relationship to this family that the first Adam took in the beginning, in whom were found all the members of the family. . . . The same relationship is sustained toward him [Christ] as was sustained toward the first Adam" (*ibid.*, p. 168). William Brickey explained Christ's likeness to human sinful flesh on the basis of imputation: "Now if when Christ took

This position apparently raised some objections, for Uriah Smith found it necessary to clarify it for Review and Herald readers. He explained that SDAs did not equate "likeness of sinful flesh," with the "exact equivalent of sinful flesh." But Christ did have a humanity that included (1) weaknesses and (2) evil tendencies such as all humanity inherits.¹ In fact, wrote Smith, if he did not he could not be tempted as we are. Thus his great victory was an example for man.²

The note of March 10, 1896, to correspondents of the Review and Herald, was not enough. Two months later Smith made another attempt to clarify the issue. This time he insisted that the question was one of semantics. The issue was not new, he wrote, but a Biblical understanding must be sought. First, the Bible does not state clearly that Christ had sinful flesh—it says he was made in "the likeness" of sinful flesh. Second, "sinful" can be understood in two ways and the definition of the term is essential to communication: (1) sinful can mean "full of sin" or (2) sinful can be used as a relative term referring to "tendencies or liabilities." Smith maintained that in the latter sense Christ took "sinful flesh," i.e., he inherited the capacity for strong temptation and was "in all points" tempted like us. "The power of temptation consists in the tendencies of the tempted one to yield."

upon himself our nature, our sins were imputed unto him, it is reasonable to believe that when we partake of his nature, his righteousness will be imputed unto us; for we shall be righteous if we have his nature; we shall be made the righteousness of God in him. If when he partook of our nature, he partook of our condemnation, then when we partake of the divine nature, we partake of divine justification." ("Made Sin for Us," RH 73:14, 1896):434. Cf. W. W. Prescott, "The Christ for Today," RH 73:15 (April 14, 1896):232.

¹This expression varies from the earlier writings.

²Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 73:10 (March 10, 1896):160.

Temptations could have no power with a being who possessed only a divine nature. It is upon the human nature that temptation exerts its force. Christ's "likeness" to sinful flesh made him subject to temptation; but it met in him a superior force, and he was, though tempted, "yet without sin."¹

With that Smith declared the case closed. It may have been an awkward way of stating the question, but Smith's clarifying attempts do two things which are helpful for this study: (1) they show a desire on the part of Adventists to maintain a view of Christ that has Biblical terminology rather than credal tradition as its touchpoint; and (2) they give insight to the Adventist understanding of "sinful." It was indeed a generalized term which did not carry with it the baggage of post-Reformation theology, viz., proper sin. Thus "sinful" propensities need not mean "sin-filled" propensities. Christ could even have such propensities without being classified as a sinner.

Unfortunately, the concern to be understood by those to whom Adventism was trying to communicate its peculiar doctrines did not run so deeply that it was always kept foremost to the SDA evangelistic task. Ellen White, writing to an Elder Baker in Australasia, counseled him to be more cautious in his presentations on the humanity of Christ and urged him not to leave the impression that Christ had "sinful propensities."² Her intent was undoubtedly as much evangelistically as theologically motivated since the evangelical community in general held a post-Reformation view of propensities (particularly in Australasia where Anglicanism dominated) as properly constituting sin. Her appeal to Baker was to make sure he was not

¹Uriah Smith, "Note," RH 73:18 (May 5, 1896):288. This view does not take seriously the Adam-Christ typology of Paul. It is not necessary to see Christ as incapable of temptation simply because he is without the sinful propensities of fallen man. Adam had no sinful propensities and yet he was tempted and fell. To avoid the Protestant doctrine of impeccability, i.e., that Christ could not sin, Smith tended to the other extreme.

²Ellen G. White, Letter 8, 1895, reprinted in Nichol (ed.). SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, pp. 1128-1129.

misunderstood regarding so crucial a topic. To be misunderstood on this point could legitimize the charge of proselytism against Adventist evangelism and give credibility to the common perception that Adventists were a cult. It would surely result in attacks on Adventism as being non-Christian.

Perhaps the same counsel would have been appropos for A. T. Jones who presented this topic with fervor. "Do not forget," he wrote in the Review and Herald of 1896, "that the mystery of God is not manifest in sinless flesh, but God manifest in sinful flesh."¹ He went on to describe Christ as possessing "our flesh, having our nature, laden with iniquity,"² and "in human flesh laden with sin."³

The Lord Jesus took the same flesh and blood, the same human nature that we have,—flesh just like our sinful flesh,—and because of sin, and by the power of the Spirit of God, through the divine mind that was in him, "condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. 8:3.⁴

¹A. T. Jones, "Ministers of God," RH 73:39 (September 29, 1896):621.

²See A. T. Jones' discussion of the meaning of "iniquity" and "transgression," in "A Question and the Answer," RH 76:11 (March 14, 1899):169-170: "Iniquity is a thing done with evil intent. Transgression is, to pass over bounds, to go out of the way, and may be done without evil intent. Sin signifies, in its root idea, to miss the mark; that is, to aim at the right mark, to do our best to hit the mark, and yet miss it by coming short; this is the root idea in the original word defining sin. . . . Everything that was ever done by anybody, except the Lord Jesus, has come short. . . .—has missed the mark,—and so is sin. . . . Our flesh is sinful flesh; there is in it the tendency to wrong and only wrong,—the tendency to pass over the bounds."

³Ibid.

⁴A. T. Jones, "Editorial," RH 76:16 (April 18, 1899):248-249. On this subject see further A. T. Jones, The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1905), pp. 17-61. For a discussion of these aspects that go beyond the scope of this project, see Robert J. Wieland, The 1888 Message (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1980), pp. 41-64. Wieland draws parallels between Jones' and Waggoner's message and the teaching of Ellen White on this subject. In a term paper, "The Nature and Extent of Ellen White's Endorsement of Waggoner and Jones," written in December 1978, for a graduate class in the Development of Seventh-day Adventist theology, Aage Rendelen

E. J. Waggoner, the son of John Harvey Waggoner, and preaching associate of A. T. Jones in the 1888 emphasis on righteousness by faith, presented the same view of the nature of Christ as his editor friend. Waggoner emphasized that Christ became a mortal human being in the incarnation. In so doing he had to be like sinful man in that it was sinful man he had come to save.¹ This likeness included "all the weaknesses and sinful tendencies to which fallen human nature is subject."² Such is the meaning of Hebrews 2:16-18: "Made in all things like unto His brethren." He was sinless while at the same time "counted as a sinner," and "actually taking upon Himself sinful nature."³

Waggoner insisted that Jesus' earthly life was one of struggle with the flesh he had taken. This flesh had the tendency to sin because it was moved upon by Satan, and "yet His Divine nature never for a moment harbored an evil desire, nor did His Divine power for a moment waver."⁴ Waggoner also makes it clear that Christ did not sin and thus he maintained his qualification as divine Savior. Man also has open to him the same options for victory in that Christ, being exactly like fallen, sinful man, albeit

concludes that Ellen White's "endorsement" of Jones and Waggoner was not quite so broad as Wieland would suggest (see Rendelen, pp. 40-42). However, it can be argued rather convincingly that the positions she takes on the nature of Christ and the question of sin are substantially the same as that of Jones and Waggoner, as Wieland has done.

¹E. J. Waggoner, Christ and His Righteousness (Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1890), p. 26.

²Ibid., pp. 26-27. See also Wieland's discussion of propensities vs. tendencies, 1888 Message, pp. 62-64. Wieland argues that propensity and inclination are different—that the former implies sinful content where the latter does not.

³Waggoner, Christ and His Righteousness, pp. 27-28.

⁴Ibid., p. 29

vicariously,¹ constitutes an example of how fallen man is extricated from the control of sin. "All the power which Christ had dwelling in Him by nature, we may have dwelling in us by grace, for He freely bestows it upon us."²

The implications of this nature give some understanding of the SDA concept of sin. This view underscores the point that (for SDAs) inclinations and tendencies to sin were not considered to be properly called sin. Jones and Waggoner did not mean to suggest that Christ was disqualified to be Savior and may not have used these terms if they had thought they would be taken that way. However, it is also true that SDAs have been misunderstood regarding their view of Christ's nature because of these very terms.³ Given the background here examined one should see the direction from which these formally untrained theologians were coming and be able to appreciate, with greater sympathy, their attempts to express their faith. Theology as a discipline does rely on a relatively established terminology. In their efforts to use a more Biblical vocabulary SDAs did not always adhere to established custom.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 28: "He was made to be sin in order that we might be made righteousness." Emphasis supplied.

²Ibid., p. 30.

³For a brief background on these attacks see Gordon R. Lewis, Confronting the Cults (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 109-111, and Anthony A. Hoekema, The Four Major Cults (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 112-115.

⁴When Ellen G. White's statements are scrutinized on this subject they are interpreted variously. But it seems that attempts to interpret them should be cast against this historical and semantical background. It is the opinion of the present writer that the theological interpretation that most closely coincides with the historical setting here studied is that which is presented in Questions on Doctrines, pp. 50-65. See further, Olson, "Outline Studies on Christian Perfection and Original Sin," pp. 27-30.

In summary, simple death was the undesirable element Adam's sin left as a legacy for his posterity, according to the earliest SDA view. Death was the penalty and death was to be viewed as temporal, literal, physical, or real—cessation of life. The second death—the death one dies in judgment for failing one's own probation—is the final penalty. But Adam's sin introduces the first death where all die irrespective of their character.

SDAs took issue with Calvinistic orthodoxy on the matter of spiritual death. For them it meant "dead in trespasses and sins," the result of personal sinful pursuit. By the close of the century they viewed spiritual death as "depravity," "carnality," "sinfulness," etc. It was a condition which was inherited from Adam. There was a departure from the earlier approaches to the question due undoubtedly to the new emphasis on righteousness by faith and the issues the SDAs were forced to deal with in the shift from anthropological to soteriological questions.

M. E. Kellogg represents the SDA view of this period in the following statement:

Instead of being innocent of sin, as he was before his fall, his whole being is infested with the virus of sin. He is now an enemy of God. . . . Now he has a decided bent toward evil and his power to seek the good and to obey God is greatly weakened. . . . Man has inherited the evil nature which came to him through his first parents as the result of sin, and he finds an inherited, powerful, overmastering law of evil in his members, which he is powerless to overcome.¹

The Mode of Transmission

It has been observed that Adventists were not opposed to using "inheritance" as a description for the passing on of the effects of Adam's sin. Death, the dying nature, the sinful nature, and the "evil heart of

¹M. E. Kellogg, "The Evil Heart and the Remedy," RH 75:13 (March 29, 1898):198-199.

unbelief" were all transmitted from Adam to his posterity.¹ How this transmission occurred is the object of the investigation in this section.

Realism

The SDA wholistic view of the soul required that the explanation for the transmission of the effects of Adam's sin be understood along traducian lines of thought. This view is theological realism. In 1864 Ellen G. White wrote:

Seth was a worthy character, and was to take the place of Abel in right doing. Yet he was a son of Adam like sinful Cain, and inherited from the nature of Adam no more natural goodness than did Cain. He was born in sin, but by the grace of God, in receiving the faithful instructions of his father Adam, he honored God in doing his will. He separated himself from the corrupt descendants of Cain, and labored, as Abel would have done had he lived, to turn the mind of sinful men to revere and obey God.²

Here a form of the realistic view, adapted and altered by Adventist conditionalism, suggests the mode of the transmission of sin's effects. Blaisdell suggested the same in 1867 in presenting his notion that man receives his sinful nature and disposition or inclination to sin from his father Adam. However, it is this disposition that leads "Adam's posterity to transgress God's law and thereby come into condemnation."³ There was no suggestion that guilt for Adam's actual sin was transmitted, i.e., sin was not transmitted, but the disposition and inclination to sin was.

¹C. M. Chaffee, "The Evil Heart and the Remedy," RH 66:42 (October 22, 1889):659: "This 'evil heart of unbelief' was given to Adam and Eve while in the garden of Eden, by the great deceiver (see Gen. 3:1-7), and has been transmitted to every son and daughter of Adam." E. H. Blaisdell, "The Righteousness of God's Law," RH 29:17 (April 2, 1867):193: "That they [Adam and Eve] did possess such a nature after the fall [disposition to sin], and that such a nature and disposition were transmitted to their posterity are facts plainly to be seen from the course of wrong in which the human family has persisted from that time to the present."

²Spiritual Gifts, 3:53-54. Emphasis supplied.

³"The Righteousness of God's Law," p. 195.

Another indication of modified realism can be seen in a poem of one C. Cotton:¹

There is a sentiment abroad
 That [1] each man's soul is from the Lord.
 But not through Adam, not at all;
 Then how affected by the fall?
 If every soul in every nation,
 Be a distinct and new creation,
 A fact you see must then appear,
 From Adam's sins they must be clear;
 For [2] Adam's sin could do no more
 Than to affect the fruit he bore.
 Now any part of us not there,
 In Adam's sin can never share.
 As [3] Levi tithes in Abr'am paid,
 So Adam's act is on us laid.

In this poem several factors stand out as indicated by the bracketed numbers above: [1] a polemic against the common Reformed theory of creationism of the soul's origin; [2] an espousing of the traducian view of the soul's origin; [3] an allusion to Heb 7:10—Levi "in the loins of his ancestor [Abraham]."

Cotton continued:

So [1] Adam's act is on us laid,
 By one man, sin came on the world,
 And death all round by it is hurled.
 By one transgression [2] death doth reign,
 And by one act [3] his race are slain.
 There are no means to be employ'd
 By which this death we can avoid.²

Three more factors suggest the mode of transmission: [1] How Adam's act is laid on man is not clearly explained, but imputation is added to the realistic scheme—"laying on" suggests transfer or sharing of responsibility; [2] through this imputation all share in Adam's death; and [3] the whole race is literally "slain" in Adam. Cotton concludes his poem

¹C. Cotton, "Adam's Sin," RH 31:9 (February 11, 1868):131.

²Ibid.

with the significant Adventist peculiarities of their doctrine of conditionalism: first and second deaths, temporal death.¹

In three Review and Herald articles of E. R. Jones, a more detailed attempt was made to distinguish the physical from the spiritual effects of Adam's sin, though modified realism still provided the understanding for the transmission of these effects. What Adam bequeathed, Jones wrote, is a principle of rebellion and insubordination, not simply a dying nature. He terms it "indwelling sin" and "innate depravity."² Jones found help in Col 3:9 which he interpreted as distinguishing between "the old man" and "his deeds" ["lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds"]. Thus, for Adam's posterity to be born with the "body of death" or "in the flesh" means to be born with the carnal nature already in them. However, to be born with this does not entail any personal guilt for it.³

¹Other authors suggest the same sort of modified realism though not always explicitly, and the term "traducian" is avoided since the SDA view of the soul did not really fit the terminology. There are indications that they knew the term. See, for example, Uriah Smith's polemic against creationism (which he called an "absurdity") and showed a closer affinity to traducianism (or as he called it "traduction"). Uriah Smith, The State of the Dead and the Destiny of the Wicked (Battle Creek: SDA Publishing Assn., 1873), pp. 70-71. Andrews held that man's life comes from Adam and thus he inherits whatever kind of life Adam has to give. Likewise, death also comes naturally to us since he is the natural head of the race. J. N. Andrews, "We Have Life from Adam," RH 34:11 (September 7, 1869):88. J. H. Waggoner, D. M. Canright, C. W. Stone, W. H. Littlejohn, and E. R. Williams, present examples of this kind of argumentation through to the end of the century. See J. H. Waggoner, "The Law of God—No. 14," RH 45:25 (June 17, 1875):193; J. H. Waggoner, "Thoughts on Baptism," RH 51:13 (March 28, 1878):87; D. M. Canright, "Can God Organize Matter to Think?" RH 50:25 (December 20, 1877):196-197; C. W. Stone, "The Resurrection," RH 54:3 (July 10, 1879):17-18; E. R. Williams, "Acceptance with God," RH 71:21 (May 22, 1894):323-324. Compare C. A. Washburn, "The Two Minds," RH 73:33 (August 18, 1896):514-515.

²E. R. Jones, "The Law of Sin," RH 66:11 (March 12, 1889):164.

³Ibid., p. 165: "Sin pertains to two things: First, the personal violations of the law of God; and, second, the principle of rebellion, or law

In his second article, Jones employs the term "inherited sin" as a synonym for "indwelling sin."¹ He defines this as "the power to sin" which is conquerable by the new birth, suggesting it was born in the physical or first birth. Consequently, for Jones true conversion is composed of two parts: (1) justification, or forgiveness, and (2) complete deliverance from inherited sin.²

Finally, in a third article, he insisted that the expression "in the flesh" (as used in Romans 8:8) is a reference not to man's mortal condition but to his moral or spiritual state.² It is "inherited depravity" brought in through Adam's disobedience. For lack of a better explanation of how this nature was transmitted, Jones' reference to "the evil passions rising up in the soul" suggests a form of realism.

Another clue regarding this mode of transmission is seen in the treatment of Mary, the mother of Jesus, whose physical inheritance is set forth:

By the disobedience of Adam all flesh became weak and open to the inroads of Satan. The mother of Jesus was a sinner by nature, and possessed those weaknesses that other mothers possess,

of sin, born in every man." Jones refers to this principle as "the carnal nature born in us," "the body of death," "this inbred tyrant," "sinful passions," the "law of sin," and the "law of sin and death." Justification, says Jones, places man exactly where he was when he was born, "with no personal guilt."

¹E. R. Jones, "Born of God," RH 66:28 (July 9, 1889):434-435.

²Ibid. See also, "The Law of Sin," p. 165: "Conversion is composed of two great parts; is contained in two great steps. First, the forgiveness of all personal transgressions of the law of God;—this is on full and fervent repentance;—and, second, the complete cleansing from the power that compelled us to transgress. The first places us before the law in the exact condition in which we were born,—with no personal guilt,—and is called justification. The second restores us to the moral image of Christ, . . . and is called 'being born again.'"

³E. R. Jones, "In the Flesh," RH 67:1 (January 7, 1890):2.

which are so often transmitted to their posterity. By being born of woman, Jesus took our nature upon him, and became man.¹

The Adventist view of original sin was not of the order that had compelled the Augustinians finally to formulate the dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary. Whether the Adventists understood these theological intricacies is immaterial. They were clearly writing in a tradition that was aware of them and had filtered out many of the complexities. The Arminian tradition as manifested in the New Haven version was not a naive tradition. However, as Adventism became more sophisticated and knowledgeable on the issues of both Scripture and traditional views, its expression became more trained and to some degree more complex from that of the earlier Adventists.

Imitation

Realism, although held by Adventists as the more natural way to view man's inheritance, was not a sufficient vehicle to convey totally the church's view on transmission. The New Haven view of sin put more emphasis on imitation than Augustine or even the school of realists would have felt comfortable doing and thus contributed to the Pelagian charge (usually leveled by the Calvinists). In harmony with this tradition Adventists sometimes appealed to imitation as a means of "transmission."

In an interpretive article on the second commandment, George Amadon commented on the phrase "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children."

Every day's experience shows us children suffering for the sins, vices and follies of their parents, by hereditary disease, poor constitution, bad education and example, bad name, intemperance,

¹J. H. Durland, "Redemption," RH 71:45 (November 13, 1894):706-707. Cf. A. T. Jones, "'Be of Good Cheer,'" RH 73:7 (February 18, 1896):104-105.

and a thousand other parental transgressions and disobedience of God's natural laws, so-called.¹

Amadon felt that the true sense of the text was: "Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the transgressing children, unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, when the children follow the iniquities of their fathers."² So both the physiological (realistic) and the imitation aspects of transmission were employed.³ Ellen White followed the same interpretive line of reasoning four years later with these words:

God did not mean in his threatening that the children should be compelled to suffer for their parents' sins, but that the example of the parents should be imitated by the children. . . . The effects of a sinful life are often inherited by the children. They follow in the footsteps of their parents. Sinful example has its influence from father to son to the third and fourth generation.⁴

¹G. W. Amadon, "The Skeptic Met," RH 16:16 (September 4, 1860):122-123.

²Ibid.

³Cf. G. C. Tenney, "The Knowledge of Evil," RH 73:39 (September 29, 1896):620.

⁴Spiritual Gifts, 3:291. Cf. Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 306. EGW continues on to insist that just as children imitate bad examples they can imitate good ones. See further, "Infidel Objections to the Bible Answers, No. 6," RH 30:26 (December 10, 1867):405. Often SDA writers mixed the physiological with the sense of imitation. See Ellen G. White, Testimonies, 2:351-352: "Children born to parents who are controlled by corrupt passions are worthless. What can be expected of such children but that they will sink lower in the scale than their parents? What can be expected of the rising generation? Thousands are devoid of principle. These very ones are transmitting to their offspring their own miserable, corrupt passions. What a legacy! Thousands drag out their unprincipled lives, tainting their associates, and perpetuating their debased passions by transmitting them to their children. They take the responsibility of giving to them the stamp of their own characters." J. A. Corliss defined fleshly lust as "those inclinations of the mind which we have inherited from our parents, or have formed by our conduct or associations with the world" ["The Grace of God," RH 48:19 (November 9, 1876):147]. W. H. Littlejohn wrote that "the consequences of every sin are transmitted to children by creating in them a proclivity to do the very wrongs that their fathers committed" ("The Sins of the Fathers Visited upon the Children," RH 62:21 [May 26, 1885]:331). G. W. Morse spoke of "inherited or acquired character" ("The Death That Passed Upon All Men," RH 65:10 [March 6, 1888]:155). EGW referred to the fact that "by inheritance and example the sons become partakers of the

In short, imitation was a form of inheritance, and particularly with a view of sin as external act, this served to help SDAs in their preaching of the law. However, Adventist writers generally spent more time explaining the salvific good news of Christ than they did delineating the intricacies of sin—even transgression of the law. Inheritance was thus a rather broad term used in the sense of whatever was natural as opposed to spiritual.¹

Imputation

Because of the stress on the importance and perpetuity of the law of God, the Adventist insistence on individual responsibility for sin never flagged. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," (Ezek 18:20) was a text used about as often as Rom 5:12 and 1 Cor 15:22. Thus Adam's posterity is neither answerable nor responsible for Adam's actual sin.²

But this raised the same serious question which had troubled Augustine and the Augustinians, namely, that if Adam's posterity is not responsible then why do they suffer? In Bible Readings (1888), by use of

father's sin" (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 306). And a very common phrase in EGWs writing on this subject was "hereditary and cultivated tendencies." See further Bruno W. Steinwig, "What About Original Sin?" pp. 9ff, for a comprehensive collection of EGW statements on this topic.

¹See C. M. Chaffee, "The Evil Heart and the Remedy," RH 66:42 (October 22, 1889):659-660; J. H. Cook, "Necessity of the New Birth," RH 67:2 (January 14, 1890):18: "If the natural birth produces a natural man, a spiritual birth must produce a spiritual man. . . . In the fall of man he has lost his divine nature given him in creation, and . . . he has become sinful"; Wm. T. Case, "The Cross of Christ," RH 67:33 (August 26, 1890):514: "Conceived in sin, born in sin, man loves the chain that binds him"; Otho C. Godsmark, "God's Word in Use," RH 68:31 (August 4, 1891):482-483; Wm. Covert, "Eternal Life," RH 68:32 (August 11, 1891):498-499: "They inherited death through Adam"; L. A. Smith, "The Wages of Sin," RH 69:14 (April 5, 1892):217-218; M. E. Kellogg, "Life From the Dead," RH 71:42 (October 23, 1894):664-665.

²J. H. Waggoner, "Thoughts on Baptism," RH 51:13 (March 28, 1878):97-98; J. N. Andrews, "Our Accountability to God," RH 59:13 (March 28, 1882):200. Cf. E. J. Waggoner, The Glad Tidings (Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1900), pp. 86ff.

Ezek 18:20, the authors stated that guilt for Adam's transgression could not be "imputed" to his descendants.¹ What was transmitted to them were "lusts of the flesh" and "desires of the mind," so that they were "by nature children of wrath" (Eph 2:3).

Yet in spite of this disclaimer there were times when the language of imputational theology was used to explain the relationship of Adam's sin to his posterity. The language was guarded with respect to the inheritance of guilt. Augustine had seen mankind as having sinned "in Adam." As a result guilt for that sin rested on his posterity. While this notion was not a part of accepted Adventist thought somehow death was warranted on the basis of Adam's sin. Furthermore, Augustine's mistranslation of Rom 5:12, i.e., "in Adam," was not regarded with the same perceivable suspicion among Adventists as it was with some in the contemporary western tradition. Elder William Covert illustrates this point in his observation that "we were all sold under sin in Adam, and as long as we hold claim to the Adamic life, we are but the slaves of Satan, and have no life of our own."² This observation is vague. It could have reference either to a realistic view of inheritance or to imitation, though the wording does not limit the meaning to either of these approaches. But the imputational view seems better to fit here.

There is specific evidence for this conclusion already presented above, but which can be reviewed profitably here: (1) The fact that Adventists perceived no organic harm caused by the tree of knowledge of good and evil suggests a view of sin's transmission that is different from

¹Bible Readings, p. 531.

²William Covert, "Eternal Life," RH 68:32 (August 11, 1891):498-499. Emphasis supplied.

the simple genetic inheritance of realism.¹ Sin and death are connected but more through relationship than physical heredity. SDAs generally held that there was no poison in the tree. (2) The suggestion of corporate solidarity "in Adam" that goes beyond a simple imitation scheme. (3) The treatment of one dying for another's sin (even if it is only considered to be an effect of that man's sin) is inadequately accounted for in either the realistic or the imitation schemes.

In spite of their traditional antipathy toward Calvinism, Adventists did eventually find it helpful to use some imputational language in their emphasis on soteriology during the final decade of the nineteenth century. An appreciation of the context of Scripture, a more serious understanding of wholistic thought, a concern for Biblical views and expression all helped to bring this about.

William Brickey underscored the imputational view by a study of how Jesus was "made sin for us."² Christ carried man's sins, not by sinning with man, but by bearing sins for man by imputation. Brickey's presentation would make Christ's work vicarious—Christ experienced condemnation by imputation not as an earned reality: "This was when he was made to be sin, and of course it was for us."³

¹For a non-Adventist contrasting view one can observe the view of the physical tree held by contemporary scholar Arthur Custance as set forth in his book, Man in Adam and in Christ (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), pp. 289ff. Custance holds to a chemical theory of the effects of the tree on Adam and his posterity. Adam and Eve introduced a toxic substance into the bloodstream of mankind. That substance finds its antidote in the fruit of the tree of life. Custance thus sees in this the explanation of inheritance—man inherits Adam's sin, not his sins (Rom 5:14), in that the substance is part of the physical system to mankind.

²William Brickey, "Made Sin for Us," RH 73:28 (July 14, 1896):434.

³Ibid. Cf. William Covert, "Righteousnes," Bible Students' Library 133 (May 1895):7-9.

Ellen White's statement regarding inherited guilt seems to stand alone in the midst of the Adventist tradition to the contrary and that fact makes interpretation open to some debate:

Parents have a more serious charge than they imagine. The inheritance of children is that of sin. Sin has separated them from God. Jesus gave His life that He might unite the broken links to God. As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death. But Christ steps in and passes over the ground where Adam fell, enduring every test in man's behalf.¹

The recapitulation theme of this statement is familiar by now, but the suggestion that man receives guilt "from him" is difficult to harmonize in view of the overwhelming unity of Adventist writers on the subject that counter what this seems to be saying.

The answer to this question may be suggested in the theology of Uriah Smith. Toward the end of the nineteenth century Uriah Smith began cautiously to use the terminology of imputational theology to explain what happened at the Fall. Answering charges against the Adventist view leveled by the editors of the Herald of Life, a periodical published in Springfield, Massachusetts, Smith concurred that Adam did not sin as an individual but as a representative, or federal head, of the race. Because of that original sin all his posterity are "accounted" sinners in that transgression. Smith also agreed that the marginal reading of the King James Version was valid, i.e., "in whom" all sinned.² However, he refused to compromise his unique

¹Letter 68, 1899, quoted in Ellen G. White, Child Guidance (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1954), p. 475. Emphasis supplied. Robert Olson interprets this as inherited guilt. See "Outline Studies on Christian Perfection and Original Sin," p. 28.

²Uriah Smith, "Resurrection of the Wicked, Again," RH 61:32 (August 5, 1884):505. Smith suggested this earlier as well, see "Does Rom. 5:18, 19, Teach Universalism?" p. 156.

antipathy toward the traditional "spiritual" view of death. Thus he presented this modified position:

In Adam we are to a certain degree counted sinners. How far?—So far as to come all alike under the dominion of death. So in Christ we are to a certain degree counted righteous. How far?—So far as to be made alive from the dead. Rom. 5:18, 19. We believe in this kind of universalism; for Paul taught it.¹

This view modified the position of the completeness of Christ's work as well. Whatever modifications Smith felt compelled to make regarding the imputation of Adam's sin he expressed concerning the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Four years later he repeated the argument almost exactly: "All men are accounted sinners in Adam so far as to come under the effects of his transgression, and become subject to death."²

Smith's view did not change after this, as a review of his most mature expression (1898) in a short article in the Review and Herald demonstrates.³ Romans 5:19 refers to Adam, the first man. The burden of the chapter (Rom 5) from vs. 12 to the end, Smith wrote, is the work of Christ to counteract the introduction of sin by Adam. In Adam all have sinned. "This does not refer to the personal sin of any of Adam's posterity, but only to the taint of evil derived from Adam, subjecting them to death." Verse 14 proves that man's personal sin in Adam was not involved for it says "not after the similitude." Adam's posterity were in Adam but their will was not involved. Thus no member of Adam's race is held responsible in any way. However, because Adam had become mortal he could only transmit his mortal nature (modified realism).

¹Uriah Smith, "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," p. 424.

²Uriah Smith, "Many Made Righteous," RH 74:21 (May 25, 1898):329-330. Cf. Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 51:17 (April 25, 1878):132.

³"Many Made Righteous," pp. 329-330.

But Smith recognized with further theological finesse the implications of this view. Somehow, if the members of the race die, there must be a reason other than simply their physical relationship to Adam. Here he finds the answer in imputation.

As death comes through sin, all who fall under death must be in some sense accounted sinners, or they could not suffer death. But, as stated above, it is not for their own sins that people now die, but on account of the mortal, dying nature they derive from Adam [realism]. Therefore it is that the whole race are accounted "sinners" [imputation] in Adam—sinners so far as to become subject to death.¹

These qualifications form the basis of Smith's interpretation of the salvific work of Christ which he found to be explained identically in both Rom 5:18 and 1 Cor 15:22. From here on his view is unchanged from that of Storrs.² Any other interpretation of the matter Smith categorizes as universalism.

Smith's view contains the same double-pronged argument as Federal theology, namely, imputation of Adam's sin and natural inheritance of its results, albeit only in terms of man's mortality. He appreciates the logical connection between dying and some kind of connection with Adam's guilt in spite of the fact that he denies any personal responsibility [culpability] on the part of the race.

Other expressions of imputation occur in the latter part of the century but without the clarity or limitation of Smith. Morse wrote that it was man's "natural heritage" to be "reckoned under sin" since, the "entire

¹Ibid., p. 329.

²Note Smith's interpretation of vs. 19: "'For as by one man's disobedience [Adam's sin] many [all men, as before] were made sinners [that is, were so far counted sinners as to be subject to death], so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many [all men, just the same as before] be made righteous [that is, shall be counted righteous so far as to be released from death, just as they had been counted sinners so far as to be made subject to death]." Ibid. Bracketing is Smith's.

race sinned in Adam."¹ And in his argument for the perpetuity of law, though good deeds were of a non-meritorious nature, he conceded that, if man were not to commit any act of sin, he would still have no salvation outside of Christ because of "the infraction occasioned by Adamic sin."²

Two explicit statements bear attention, both from the Sabbath School Quarterly of 1896. In the first (April 25, 1896), the author presents the SDA argument for the first and second deaths, then concludes that "Christ appeared 'to abolish death,' and the death which He abolished was the death that came into the world by the original sin [Rom. 5:12], and through the temptation of the original murderer."³ The next week he reiterates the same issue.⁴ John 3:18 refers to the condemnation of the second death, a penalty not for original sin but for personal sin. All are sinners for all have transgressed and thus are at enmity with God.

At this point an argument is employed that is common in the Augustinian tradition of theology:

Paul clearly teaches that we are constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam. Rom. 5:12. Here is the first imputation, that of Adam's sin to the whole race, who sinned in him and died in him. Now follow the parallel in Christ. he bore "our sins in His own body on the tree." "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." This is the second act of imputation. Then follows the third act of imputation, in that Christ was made "our

¹G. W. Morse, "Faith vs. the Deeds of the Law as a Means of Justification," RH 65:25 (June 19, 1888):394.

²Ibid. See also G. Fred Stevens, "The Law to Fallen Man—No. 3," RH 69:19 (May 10, 1892):291: "Both he [Adam] and his posterity passed under its condemnation, and the law of life and liberty became to us a law of bondage unto death." Note also in Stevens' article, "By Adam's disobedience, we fell from the standard." Emphasis supplied.

³"Life in Christ," International Sabbath School Quarterly (Second Quarter, 1896):12.

⁴Ibid., p. 14: "The sentence of death spoken of in Rom. 6:23 and Eze. 18:4 can have no reference to the original sin, for Christ has saved all from that death, whether righteous or wicked. 1 Cor. 15:22."

righteousness," so that "we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." See 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24.¹

This three-fold view of imputation has its roots in the western Augustinian tradition and finds expression in Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed thought.²

While this is an exceptional expression in the SDA tradition, one can see a broadening in the awareness of Adventist writers with regard to the issues involved in the question of original sin.³ Realism, imitation, and imputation all found expression in the explanation of the transmission of Adam's sin. However, it should be remembered that Adventism denied any conclusion that would spiritualize death or that would erode personal responsibility. One is punished for his own sins though one can suffer in consequence of someone else's. Man dies because Adam's original sin has in

¹Ibid., p. 15.

²See B. B. Warfield, Biblical and Theological Studies (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1968), p. 263: "In the developed theology thus brought into the possession of the Church, three several acts of imputation were established and expounded. These are the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; the imputation of the sins of His people to the Redeemer; the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to His people. . . . These three great doctrines became the property of the whole Church, and found a place in the classical theology of the Roman, Lutheran, and Reformed alike." Ellen White employed imputational language in her recapitulation theme: "Christ came not confessing his own sins; but guilt was imputed to him as the sinner's substitute. He came not to repent on his own account; but in behalf of the sinner. As man had transgressed the law of God, Christ was to fulfill every requirement of that law, and thus show perfect obedience." "Life and Mission of John," RH 41:6 (January 21, 1873):42-43. James White also used this language: "Jesus took man's place, stood the test, and his success in working out a righteous character in man's behalf, is as complete as was Adam's failure. . . . The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the just and the redeemed lose all their shame and disgrace in their Redeemer. The redeemed will then stand complete. . ." ("Grace and Glory," RH 43:9 [February 10, 1874]:65-66).

³Later the same year the Quarterly would use similar language: "We are free from the imputation of Adam's sin, because He as the second Adam has borne it away; free from the lash of a broken law because He has paid the penalty, and met its last demands" ("The Gospel of John," International Sabbath School Quarterly, [Fourth Quarter, 1896]:24-25).

some way been imputed to him, but this is not to be understood as guilt. The consequence is temporary death not eternal punishment.

The Innocence of Infants

A final clue to Adventism's understanding of the mode of transmission can be sought in its view of infant salvation. Much of the information on this subject comes from the question and answer columns of the Review and Herald and is understandable as addressed to specific questions (which tended to border on speculation) sent in by readers.

James White, in response to the question, "Will all infants be saved?" answered that the subject was not a profitable one for study because of the lack of divine revelation on the topic. He insisted that discussion of it could result in "no possible good."¹ Had God thought the subject important some Biblical writer would have addressed it. Consequently, he maintained, "we have no settled faith on this point."²

However, not all SDA writers followed White's counsel for silence. C. W. Stone held that infants would be raised at the resurrection and "grow up as calves of the stall."³ Uriah Smith answered a similar question in the affirmative and invoked his traditional argument that "infants are saved in Christ even though they die in Adam."⁴ In another article he further explained that "the law will have no claim upon infants; for they have

¹James White, "Matthew 18:1-6," RH 18:21 (October 22, 1861):164.

²James White, "Questions and Answers," RH 21:4 (December 23, 1862):29. White did concede that children are unaccountable but that the church could spend its time more wisely discussing the responsibility of people who are accountable for sin. Contrast this with his earlier view. See above in this study, p. 247.

³C. W. Stone, "To Correspondents," RH 48:20 (November 16, 1876):157.

⁴Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 47:17 (April 17, 1876):133.

never transgressed it."¹ And G. W. Morse collected what he thought was all the Scriptural support for his position:

The resurrection of children is assured. See Jer. 31:16; 1 Cor. 15:22. Children will be saved in heaven. Matt. 19:14. There will be children in the new earth. Isa. 11:6. The whole human race is subject to the Adamic death, because of the Adamic sin. We understand that the sacrifice made by Christ includes the release from the Adamic death for the entire human race—a fact attested by the assurance that all will be raised from that death. . . . The Adamic sin is the only sin that can be chargeable to children previous to the time of their personal accountability.²

Ramifications of these questions occurred periodically in the Review and Herald. (1) "If a child of sinful parents dies before he comes to years of understanding, and the parents die in sin, is that child lost?" asked one reader, to which G. C. Tenney answered simply—there is no Scriptural light on this.³ (2) Concern was expressed over the connection of the second commandment and Jer 31:29-30 which stressed individual responsibility. Uriah Smith answered this issue by explaining that the commandment had to do both with heredity and imitation.⁴ (3) Paul's reference, in 1 Cor 7:14, to the "uncleanness," and the "holiness" of children, caused some inquiry. Morse explained that children were indeed holy, as Paul had said, even if only one parent was a believer. But he qualified the text by limiting its

¹Uriah Smith, "The Resurrection," RH 62:3 (January 20, 1885):48.

²G. W. Morse, "Scripture Questions," RH 65:32 (August 7, 1888):506. Morse held that since only accountable sin carries with it punishment and since the Atonement does not cover the Adamic results of temporal death, children must die but are not held accountable for sins, of which they have none. Thus they are eternally saved. They pay for the Adamic sin by dying but since they have committed no personal sin, when God decrees that the just be just still (Revelation 22:11), they will be found remaining in that state. Cf. W. H. Littlejohn, "The Resurrection of Infants," RH 61:60 (December 16, 1884):795. Littlejohn lists the following texts: Rev 20:12, John 5:28-29, Jer 31:15-16, and Matt 2:17-18.

³G. C. Tenney, "To Correspondents," RH 73:5 (February 4, 1896):74.

⁴Uriah Smith, "In the Question Chair," RH 69:9 (March 1, 1892):136-137.

reference only to those children who have not yet reached the age of accountability.¹ When a reader objected that Morse evaded the issue (can children of unbelieving parents be saved?), Morse replied that space in his column did not allow for the magnitude that discussion of such a question would require.²

The most extensive contribution to this question was made by J. H. Waggoner who dealt with the question in a series of Review and Herald articles on baptism that later appeared in book form.³ The series was a polemic against pedo-baptism and briefly treated the place of the doctrine of original sin in the establishment of the tradition of infant baptism. Waggoner's argument is directed not at the former but at the latter. Waggoner affirmed the stand that children have no sins to account for and that baptism was not for the purpose of washing away original sin or natural depravity.⁴ Any position to the contrary would have to admit that all infants are lost, a notion SDAs were not prepared to espouse.⁵ Waggoner criticized both the Arminians and the Calvinists for their practice of infant baptism.⁶ The salvation of infants, he suggested, is on a different basis—they have committed no sin and therefore they have nothing of which to be pardoned. If Adam's transgression were the infant's sin then the infant would

¹G. W. Morse, "What Becomes of Children of Unbelieving Parents?" RH 63:8 (February 16, 1886):107.

²G. W. Morse, "Scripture Questions," RH 63:9 (February 23, 1886):123.

³J. H. Waggoner, Christian Baptism (Battle Creek: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1878).

⁴J. H. Waggoner, "Thoughts on Baptism," RH 51:12 (March 21, 1878):89.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁶*Ibid.* Waggoner quoted several theologians, including John Wesley, who supported the idea of original sin being the reason for infant baptism.

be damned for he could not repent at his tender age.¹ But through "the Gospel" infants receive salvation, and all die, not as "sinners condemned," but simply as mortal creatures who have been cut off from the tree of life.

His [Adam's] sin brought condemnation to himself, and it was deserved; but it brings no condemnation to these innocent ones; they do not deserve it, and "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father."²

The mode of transmission for Waggoner was explained in the simple terms of deprivation of the tree of life—Adam's race dies because it continues to be deprived of this source. The issue is not rooted in imputation for "on no principle of justice can they [infants] be condemned." And children are saved "by the Gospel," not by faith, repentance, or baptism. The latter method was for sinners "not for innocents" (which infants are).³ Children inherit Adam's mortality but not his condemnation, and baptism will not remove any so-called original sin or depravity caused by being deprived of the tree of life.⁴

The truth is, and everyone knows it, whether Baptist or Pedo-baptist, that the salvation of infants is not suspended upon conditions or duties. Or if it is, no infant can be saved. The death of Christ avails for them without conditions, because they have committed no sin. To make their salvation conditional, as the theory of "infant baptism" does, is to place it entirely in the power of other parties. Who will accept a doctrine leading to such results? We cannot.⁵

The most frequently used proof-text for this view was Jer 31:15-17 as understood through its New Testament application to the children of Bethlehem killed by Herod's soldiers. Demonstrating that these children were

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 97.

³Ibid., pp. 97-98.

⁴Ibid., pp. 105-106.

⁵J. H. Waggoner, "Infantile Logic," ST 5:15 (April 10, 1879):118.

in the grave, i.e., had not gone to heaven, SDA writers insisted that this passage taught clearly that all children who died before the age of accountability would be in the kingdom.¹

Adventists did not suggest that innocent children would be saved without the gospel work of Christ in their behalf. Their innocency was still in relation to Adam's sin, and whether one calls man's position of lostness by terms such as guilt, depravity, or sin, there still remains something charged to the child that renders him in need of the saving work of Christ. SDA writers agreed that innocence was a state of the absence of actual sin in the infant. Yet in admitting that Christ's work stood for them until the age of accountability, they were asserting that the human race had become lost. The joyful news of a salvific action of God seemed of more importance to the early SDAs than figuring out how sin is transmitted to children.

In short, it is apparent that for SDAs of the nineteenth century it did not seem crucial to be as precise in their descriptions of the transmission of sin as the Protestant confessions had been. Aside from articles in the church periodicals (which usually defended a unique church position), no real attempts were made to construct a theological explanation of transmission comparable to Augustine or Luther. There is rather a preoccupation with acquiring life and escaping death that keeps SDA writers from speculating unduly beyond what Scripture has revealed in regard to sin's transmission. Consequently, they tend to use terms which will be of help in their explication of peculiar doctrines. Broad terms such as "inheritance" and "ruin" are used. But the language of realism, imitation,

¹G. I. Butler, "The Resurrection," RH 46:5 (July 29, 1875):34; J. H. Waggoner, "Thoughts on Baptism," p. 97. Cf. G. W. Morse, "Children and Baptism," RH 65:35 (August 28, 1888):554.

and imputation are generally used imprecisely to serve the purpose of their wholistic theology which finds meaning in the recapitulationist expression.

The Present Nature of Man

The final question this study deals with is the question of the present nature of man. How did the early Adventists perceive of the solution to man's problem as caused by the entrance of sin? Discovery of this theological element should reveal a final clue to the overall perspective of the Adventist view of the effects of Adam's sin.

Reconstructing the Doctrine of the New Birth

Between the years 1860-1900 the Adventist view of the new birth underwent a major revision. In the 1850s the view that dominated, at least that explained most emphatically by Uriah Smith, was the notion of the new birth as resurrection. The water birth of John 3 was the natural birth, the spiritual birth was the first resurrection. It was thus that no one could be saved eternally unless he experienced the new birth.¹ In spite of initial opposition to the view, Smith held to it, and for the first decade little appeared in the Adventist press seriously to challenge it.

In spite of the strong but very brief emphasis given the subject by Smith, little more was said and the subject was not generally expounded upon by other Adventists in the very early days.²

¹See above in this study, pp. 252-257.

²There is some indication that R. F. Cottrell held this view. In his dialogue with N. V. Hull he wrote, "I do not see how it makes Jesus 'trifle with an earnest inquirer,' to represent that he told Nicodemus that he was mistaken in thinking 'that the kingdom of God should immediately appear; (Luke xix,11,) that the present state of 'flesh and blood' cannot inherit it; and that therefore he must not expect it till the birth from the death, and the change to immortality, prefigured by baptism, should take place." N. V. Hull, R. F. Cottrell, "Nature and Destiny of Man," RH 24:7 (July 12, 1864):49-51. In 1873 Cottrell answers a reader's question regarding

After three decades of relative silence on the topic, Uriah Smith reacted strongly when a certain A. McLearn, an ex-SDA (and by 1889 an anti-SDA) wrote a tract entitled, "Seventh-day Adventism: Some of Its Errors and Delusions." He charged: "The new birth with an Adventist means the first resurrection."¹ Smith insisted that this was a "misrepresentation" of the church's teaching and that if the local Adventists had known that this was what McLearn was believing when he was a church member, they "would have been tempted to disfellowship him."² It might seem that the thirty intervening years had dulled Smith's memory, but actually a reconsideration of the doctrine had indeed taken place in the wake of the church's gradual broadening in their understanding of the notion.

how many births there are in the Bible: "There is one literal birth. Another event analogous to this is, by a figure, called a birth. To be born again implies a second birth; so there are two events, at least, designated as births. The first or literal birth introduces us to the present life; the second is necessary to the future life in the kingdom of Heaven. The resurrection is a birth from the dead . . . therefore if there are but two births, the resurrection is the second. But the resurrection is prefigured at conversion in which the sinner becomes dead to sin, is buried in the likeness of Christ's death, and rises from the emblematic grave in the likeness of Christ's resurrection and his own. . . . We think that born, in I John 3:9; 5:1, 18 &c., should be begotten, and begotten, in Rev. 1:5, should be born, as rendered by Campbell and others" ("Answers to Correspondents," RH 41:13 [March 11, 1873]:104). In addition to Cottrell's remarks, Henry Phelps reported on a sermon by a Brother Pierce who preached that to be born again in this world can be nothing more than an embryonic state compared with the resurrection at which he will be "born of the spirit." Pierce then proceeds to give an argument very similar to that of Pinney and Barry: "'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is 'born of God.' The original word which is here rendered 'born' has two significations, 'born' and 'begotten.' It should here be rendered 'begotten.' Not that the Christian is 'born again' in this world; he is only begotten here by the Father, and is in embryo, till the resurrection, when he is 'born of the Spirit,' . . . We are born again, we are as the wind, can go and come unperceived by mortal eyes, even as those who came out of their graves 'at his resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.'" Henry F. Phelps, "Monthly Meeting at Greenwood," RH 30:21 (November 5, 1867):324.

¹Uriah Smith, "Another Attack," RH 66:11 (March 12, 1889):168.

²Ibid.

In 1869 John Matteson had taken issue with the distinctions some Adventists were making between "begotten" and "born" in New Testament usage. Writers were saying that at conversion a person was begotten of God, but at the first resurrection the righteous would be born of God. What makes a person a child of God, Matteson claimed, was not the *resurrection* but *obedience to God*.¹ Through Christ man is adopted as a child of God and that adoption takes place now, not at the resurrection. It is immortality that will be bestowed at the resurrection, not sonship.

A second brick in the wall of the old argument was removed when J. H. Waggoner pointed out that "spiritual" is contrasted in Scripture with "carnal" not "physical." When a person becomes spiritual he is "no less possessed of physical proportion" than when he was carnal.²

¹John Matteson, "Children of God," RH 34:16 (October 12, 1869):122-123. Matteson argued from the Greek and contended that the words for "begotten" and "born" are the same in the original, thus any distinction between them was unbiblical. A person who is a child is a child whether he is resurrected or not. A child of the devil is such because he is subject to the devil and therefore subject to wrath or hell. The issue, said Matteson, was one of relationship—obedience makes one a child of God. Uriah Smith shows a departure from his earlier position when he suggests that the "born of God" in 1 John 3:9 "undoubtedly" refers to conversion. Turning his old arguments around he now argues that to be unable to sin ("he cannot sin, because he is born of God") indicates one's attitude after conversion: "If a man is truly converted, the whole tenor of his life and the inclination of his mind is against sin. He cannot, like the wicked, pursue sin for love of it nor follow it as the chief good of his existence." The question now was not the physical capability for sinning but the "reformed emotions and affections of his soul" which would draw him away from the sin. Uriah Smith, "1 John 3:9," RH 35:17 (April 12, 1870):132. See also Uriah Smith, "No Man that Sinneth Not," RH 54:20 (November 6, 1879):158. Cf. Uriah Smith, "Born of God," RH 45:19 (May 6, 1875):149; Uriah Smith, "The New Birth," RH 48:7 (August 10, 1878):52; G. W. Morse, "Complete Salvation—When Will It Be Enjoyed?" RH 65:38 (September 18, 1888):601-602.

²J. H. Waggoner, "Material and Immaterial," ST 2:7 (January 13, 1876):52. Waggoner argues: "These words express qualities or conditions. The same man who is carnal becomes spiritual. He is no less a material man; no less possessed of physical proportion when he is spiritual than when he was carnal." Contrast this to Smith's view of the first decade. See Uriah Smith, "Ye Must Be Born Again," RH 8:1 (August 10, 1856):8.

By 1887 the old view was openly referred to as "error" by William Brickey who argued (as had John Byington back in 1856) that if the resurrection was the new birth then the wicked were all slated to be born again. Brickey denied that the "water" could refer to natural birth and insisted this was speaking of baptism.¹

The early view was the more narrow one. Undoubtedly Storrs' emphasis on the physical aspects of the dying nature contributed to this. But as time went on SDAs became more precise in their Biblical expositions, as well as more cognizant of the broader implications of theology, and their ever-widening concept of the "sinful nature" as more than simply an anthropological notion apparently contributed to a shift in expression on the new birth. G. W. Morse adds weight to this hypothesis when he writes in 1888:

By the new birth we understand is meant the entire change necessary to fit us for a residence with the saints in heaven. It consists of two parts: First a moral change wrought by conversion, and a Christian life. (In this is included repentance, baptism, and the performing of duties incumbent upon Christians in this dispensation). Second, a physical change at the second coming of Christ, whereby, if dead, we shall be raised incorruptible, and if living, we shall be changed to immortality, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.²

A major obstacle in reconstructing the doctrine of the new birth was ascertaining a correct understanding of 1 John 3:6, 9, which asserted that one who is "born of God" cannot sin. Pinney and Barry, along with Smith, had taken the position that this was speaking of a physical impossibility

¹William Brickey, "The New Birth," RH 64:20 (May 17, 1887):307.

²G. W. Morse, "The New Birth," RH 65:39 (September 25, 1888):618. H. A. St. John used different words which meant the same thing: "The favor and Spirit of God are first restored, then, later on, a right to the tree of life and a home in the earth made new." "Man," RH 66:27 (July 2, 1889):418. And Smith conceded that conversion is the beginning of the new birth process while the bestowal of immortality is the completion. See Uriah Smith, "Fundamental Principles," ST 1:1 (June 4, 1874):3.

and thus interpreted the phrase as referring to the resurrection when man is rendered incapable of sinning. However, as the SDA writers discovered the Greek nuances of the text, they came to the conclusion that this interpretation was not sound. They became convinced that rather than referring to a physical incapacity, John meant a moral preference that comes as the result of the Holy Spirit's work on the converted heart. Hence a converted sinner finds it morally or conscientiously "impossible" to continue living habitually in a life of sin.¹

When John says that the converted man "cannot sin," he means that sin is so distasteful to his feelings that he will not do it. But that very same John said in his same epistle, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father."²

In 1874, Uriah Smith published a list of Adventist beliefs which he entitled "Fundamental Principles." The church's view of the new birth was stated under Article 5:

That the new birth comprises the entire change necessary to fit us for the kingdom of God, and consists of two parts: First a moral change, wrought by conversion and a Christian life; second, a physical change at the second coming of Christ, whereby if dead, we are raised incorruptible, and, if living, are changed to immortality

¹W. H. Littlejohn, "Cannot Sin," RH 60:24 (June 12, 1883):379, argued from the commentaries of Dodderidge and Macknight to explain 1 John 3:9. Rather than a physical argument, i.e., man is rendered incapable of sinning, Littlejohn insisted that there is a moral argument here, i.e., it is morally impossible for the person who is "born of God" to sin. Cf. W. H. Littlejohn, "Sin and No Sin," RH 61:6 (February 5, 1884):91. Here Littlejohn brings out the additional point: those "born of God" do not deliberately sin. In 1885 A. O. Tait again emphasized the power of man's choice in the matter—a person cannot sin in the sense that he chooses not to sin—he chooses God's will over his. Tait goes on to stress that some have perverted this text to teach sinless perfectionism. A. O. Tait, "1 John 3:9," RH 62:5 (February 3, 1885):67-68.

²D. M. Canright, "He Cannot Sin," RH 62:37 (September 15, 1885):586. Cf. Ellen G. White, "Loyalty to the Law Is Loyalty to God," ST 22:18 (April 30, 1896):277: "If a man is born of God, he will respect the principles of the divine government, and will not wilfully transgress the law of God in thought, or word, or action.

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. John 3:3, 5; Luke 20:36; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.¹

This view preserved the earlier view of the resurrection but put equal emphasis on the spiritual rebirth. G. I. Butler wrote an article in 1877 that indicated a major turning point for the spiritual view.² From that time on, the spiritual view strengthened and soon dominated until by 1931 all reference to the resurrection as the new birth was completely deleted from official Adventist statements of doctrine.³

Butler argued that (1) life does not begin until one is born—this is true physically but also spiritually. (2) The Scriptures recognize a distinction between physical and spiritual life. For an example of this distinction Butler surveyed 1 Pet 1-2 and concluded that Peter must be writing of conversion when he refers to being born again. (3) The meaning of the author with regard to the distinction between "begotten" and "born" must be determined by the context of Scripture since the Greek makes no such distinction.

Here we see represented a state of things not following a begetting, a state of things certainly existing before the resurrection. We do not believe a single passage of Scripture can be found where any part of Christian experience succeeding the first steps in conversion, is compared to fetal life, coming between generation and birth.⁴

¹Uriah Smith, "The Seventh-Day [sic] Adventists," RH 44:22 (November 24, 1874):171.

²G. I. Butler, "Is Conversion Ever Called a Birth?" RH 49:8 (February 22, 1877):57.

³In 1931 the Fundamental Beliefs statement on the new birth read: "That every person, in order to obtain salvation, must experience the new birth. This comprises an entire transformation of life and character by the re-creative power of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 3:16; Matt. 18:3; Acts 2:37-39)." Church Manual (Washington: General Conference of SDA, 1959), p. 30.

⁴Butler, "Is Conversion Ever Called a Birth," p. 57.

This shows the early Adventist understanding of the difference between "begotten" and "born."¹ The former is a kind of conception which brings embryonic development but does not bear full fruition until actual birth. Butler insists that this view is not contextually sound. If being "begotten" were conversion, then Scripture would not refer to the converted as "children," for children became such at birth, not conception.

We propose to show that acceptance of God's word, repentance of sin, true faith in Christ as our Saviour, and obedience to truth, connected as they ever will be with the work of the Spirit of God upon the heart, will produce a radical transformation of the life, and that the Scriptures recognize this changed life as a new life, and the man living it as a new man, a new creature, and the point where the old life stops as a death, and the beginning of the new life as a birth, recognizing those just commencing this life, or having made but little proficiency in it, as babes, while those more experienced are called young men, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, children of the living God and heirs with Christ, even in this present mortal life.²

This long sentence was a digest of Butler's article. Repentance is a death—the death of the old man of sin. And a radical change takes place (Romans 6:1ff). This change is manifest in obedience—the spiritual Christian life, albeit mortality remains its lot. Galatians 2:20 calls conversion a life and since life implies birth, there must have been a spiritual birth properly

¹This was the same sort of distinction the Adventist anti-trinitarians used to distinguish Christ's relationship to the Father. Uriah Smith wrote in 1896, "He [Christ] was not a created being [that is, "born"], but 'proceedeth forth and came from God, [that is, "begotten"]" ("In the Question Chair," RH 73:51 [December 22, 1896]:813). Earlier, W. H. Littlejohn had commented on the Adventist belief about Christ: "You are mistaken in supposing that S.D. Adventists teach that Christ was ever created [born]. They believe, on the contrary, that he was 'begotten of the Father,' and that he can properly be called God and worshiped as such. . . . They believe, . . . that somewhere in the external ages of the past there was a point at which Christ came into existence" ("Christ Not a Created Being," RH 60:16 [April 17, 1883]:250). Cf. John Matteson, "Children of God," RH 34:16 (October 12, 1869):123. For a survey of Adventist views on the trinity see Russell Holt, "The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination: Its Rejection and Acceptance," Term paper, 1969, Heritage Room. Andrews University. (Typescript.)

²"Is Conversion Ever Called a Birth," p. 57.

so-called. such life is a life of faith—not a mere fetal birth but childhood and manhood (Gal 3:26).

Butler's article is replete with proof texts that demonstrate the alleged validity of his position, namely, that "with conversion and baptism a new life, a new creature, separated from the old sinful life" is introduced "by a new creation or a new birth, in order to its existence."¹

From this point to the end of the century the spiritual view on the new birth remained the major expression of Adventism.²

The Marring of the Image of God

Since Adam sinned, the image of God in man has been marred and man has lost the pure and high nature with which he was created. These effects are physical, mental, and moral.³ The heart of man is "the fountain of evil" for out of it flows all the perverted water of sinfulness.⁴

¹Ibid.

²See Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," RH 50:16 (October 18, 1877):124-125; E. W. Farnsworth, "The Religion of the Old Testament," RH 59:15 (April 11, 1882):228; W. H. Littlejohn, "Born Again," RH 62:9 (March 3, 1885):138; W. H. Littlejohn, "The New Birth," RH 62:29 (July 21, 1885):458; B. F. Merritt, "Entering the Christian Life," RH 63:13 (March 30, 1886):196; Albert Weeks, "Conversion, or the New Birth," RH 64:12, 13 (March 22, 29, 1887):178-179, 195-196; Bible Readings, pp. 118, 136, 262, 458; Uriah Smith, "Another Attack," RH 66:11 (March 12, 1889):168-169; Obadiah Davis, "The Teaching of Romans 7," RH 66:26 (June 25, 1889):404; Ellen G. White, "The Righteousness of Christ," RH 67:32 (August 18, 1890):1; Ellen G. White, "Sanctification Through the Truth," RH 69:15 (April 12, 1892):225-226; Uriah Smith, "In the Question Chair," RH 68:28 (July 14, 1891):438; Uriah Smith, "In the Question Chair," RH 70:2 (January 10, 1893):24; August King, "Gathering Thoughts from First John," RH 70:49 (December 12, 1893):786-787; W. S. Cruzan, "Redemption," RH 73:36 (September 8, 1896):567; E. J. Dryer, "The New Mind," RH 73:50 (December 15, 1896):792.

³F. M. Bragg, "Happiness," RH 25:5 (December 27, 1864):34. Cf. "Lessons from the Word and Spirit, Lesson V—Power of God's Word.—Continued," RH 70:3 (January 17, 1893):46.

⁴M. E. Kellogg, "The Fountain of Evil," RH 71:34 (August 21, 1894):537-538. Cf. Uriah Smith, "Answers to Correspondents," RH 71:41 (October 16, 1894):651. "From . . . [the heart] every evil action proceeds."

We are being formed for expansion and culture intellectually, morally and physically, all are necessary to perfect happiness; but our race have lost their pure and high nature, by the fall in the sin of our first parents, so none are perfectly happy in this imperfect state, so marred by sin; for none are of perfect physical form, of high pure moral nature, and of noble intellect.¹

It is clear that Adventists saw a serious damage done to man's spiritual capacity because of Adam's sin. The problem was compounded by personal pursuit of sin. This view of sin was relational in nature; it accounted for twisted perceptions. Yet the sense of alienation, estrangement, and separation, accounts for man's general undoneness.² Man's spiritual capacity is depicted as injured, diseased, and dead without Christ.³ But aside from one or two unclear statements on guilt by Ellen White, there are no precise statements that SDAs included propensities as properly called sin. What God has to deal with in the human problem takes on a two-fold character: (1) death and (2) overcoming the evil human heart. This defines the nature of the work of Jesus Christ and his redemptive task.

¹F. M. Bragg, "Happiness," p. 34. Emphasis supplied. Cf. Ellen G. White, Education, p. 15: "Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed." Ibid., p. 25: "Man lost all because he chose to listen to the deceiver rather than to Him who is truth." Ibid., p. 29: "Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing him." Ellen G. White, Desire of Ages, p. 161: "Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the divine One." Ellen G. White, Letter 8, 1895, quoted in Nichol (ed.), SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1128: "Because of sin his [Adam's] posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience."

²See Ellen G. White, Letter 10, 1888, (EGW Estate MS Release 585): "One of the deplorable effects of the original apostasy was the loss of man's power to govern his own heart. When there is a separation from the sources of your strength, when you are lifted up in pride, you cannot but transgress the law of your moral constitution."

³See Ellen G. White, Manuscript 60, 1905, (EGW Estate MS Release 585): "We are not to seek to extenuate the consequences of the original apostasy. It is not possible to overstate the degree of alienation from truth and righteousness entered into by those whose souls revolt from God."

The Work of Christ

While a full adjustment to the reinterpreted view of the new birth was not completed by 1900, it is helpful here to recount briefly how Adventists expressed their view of Christ's effectual work with regard to whatever spiritually deficient nature Adam left man with. First, however, it should be stressed that Adventists, in their maturing views, did not repudiate their view of death. Therefore a primary purpose of the incarnation and the death of Christ was to taste death and provide a substitutionary, vicarious sacrifice.¹

But the emphasis put on the spiritual aspects of Christ's work was also present: (1) his perfect sinless life;² (2) his likeness to "fallen" man,

¹SDA statements on the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice abound. The following are just a sample to illustrate this point. J. H. Waggoner, "Battle Creek Bible Class," RH 31:20 (April 18, 1868):308: "The penalty [for sin] is death; not temporal, eternal, first, nor second; but simply death, that Christ died, and of course suffered the penalty; that he bears sin in our behalf." Ellen G. White, Testimonies, 2:200-201: "Christ consented to die in the sinner's stead, that man, by a life of obedience, might escape the penalty of the law of God. His death did not make the law of none effect; it did not slay the law, lessen its holy claims, nor detract from its sacred dignity. The death of Christ proclaimed the justice of His Father's law in punishing the transgressor, in that He consented to suffer the penalty of the law Himself in order to save fallen man from its curse. The death of God's beloved Son on the cross shows the immutability of the law of God." Bible Readings [1888], p. 531: "If man was ever to be reconciled to God, after having incurred the death penalty, it was necessary for Christ to taste death for every one under the sentence of death, in order to satisfy justice, and give man a hope of redemption. There was no other way in which God could be just, and yet justify, or make just, the sinner, except by having Christ, the sinless one, die for those under the sentence of death (1 Peter 3:18), and then to declare the righteousness of Christ in behalf of the sorrowing, penitent, believing sinner. Rom. 3:25, 26." Cf. Ellen G. White, "Sanctification," RH 57:10 (March 8, 1881):145-146; L. A. Smith, "The Wages of Sin," RH 69:14 (April 5, 1892):217-218.

²Ellen G. White, "The First Advent of Christ," RH 41:1 (December 17, 1872):2-3: "Man could not atone for man. His sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, unless the offering made should in value be superior to man as he was in his state of perfection and innocency."

"that he might be made perfect through suffering" and "understand how to succor these who should be tempted;"¹ (3) his complete work of vindicating the law of God at the cross;² (4) the quiescence of his divinity during his incarnation and ministry on earth;³ (5) the perfecting of a character for mankind;⁴ (6) the bearing of Adam's guilt and its consequences;⁵ (7) the destruction of sin in God's people.⁶

On this last point G. W. Draper elaborated:

The mission of Jesus Christ was to destroy sin in his people.—
 "He shall save his people from their sins,"—not the consequences only [death], but their sins. Matt. 1:21. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil" (1 John 3:8); "that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus 2:14 (See also Eph. 5:25-27).⁷

¹Ellen G. White, "The Life of Christ," RH 41:3 (December 31, 1872):18-19. Cf. William Covert, "The Victory of Christ," RH 73:2 (January 14, 1896):18.

²Ellen G. White, "Redemption—No 2," RH 43:12 (March 3, 1874):91: "There was no virtue in the blood of animals; but the shedding of the blood of beasts was to point forward to a Redeemer who would one day come to the world and die for the sins of men. And thus Christ would fully vindicate his Father's law."

³Ellen G. White, "The Temptation of Christ," RH 44:9 (August 18, 1874):67: "In becoming man's substitute, Christ did not manifest his power as the Son of God. . . . The life of Christ was a perfect pattern."

⁴Ellen G. White, "Temptation of Christ," RH 45:10 (March 4, 1875):74: "Christ came to the world to perfect a righteous character for many, and to elevate the fallen race." See further Steps to Christ, pp. 62-63.

⁵Ellen G. White, "Obedience is Sanctification," RH 16:19 (May 19, 1890):2: "We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by his obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression." Cf. Ellen G. White, "Make Straight Paths for Your Feet," RH 74:34 (August 24, 1897):529-530; Ellen G. White, "Our Sacrifice," ST 24:49 (December 8, 1898):769-770.

⁶G. W. Draper, "Holiness," RH 68:30 (July 28, 1891):467-468.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 467.

Draper concludes that the chief work of Satan is the sinful nature of man: "the root and cause of all evil in mankind." For man to stop sinning, his heart must be "purified." Thus Christ came to destroy not only death but the sinful nature as well—"his disposition to do evil."¹ The Biblical expression for this work is "writing the law in the heart," and Draper held that "their sinful desires will have been completely eradicated" when the redeemed are fully cleansed.

Overcoming

As a result of the view that propensities do not constitute real sin, together with the position that the new birth is spiritual, overcoming sin is presented with strong encouragement in early SDA theology, and a stress on sanctification becomes characteristic of Adventist soteriology.

Albert Stone made a distinction between regeneration (that action of God that occurs but once in the Christian's life) and conversion (which must occur repeatedly).² As knowledge is implanted gradually in the Christian, he is converted anew, that is, he turns from his sins and breaks off doing unrighteousness.³ The law is the instrument through which this knowledge comes, and Stone insisted that by exalting the law he was in no way minimizing the importance of Christ.⁴

This gradual development view coincided with a progressive view of

¹Ibid. As a rule Ellen White balanced her statements about objective or alien righteousness with references to character development. A typical example of this can be seen in Steps to Christ, pp. 62-64.

²Albert Stone, "Conversion," RH 33:20 (May 11, 1869):153-154.

³Ibid., p. 154: "Conversion can proceed no faster than our advance in correct knowledge makes way for it; and a state of perfect conformity to God implies the possession of understanding perfectly acquainted with the law of God."

⁴Ibid.

sanctification and could be described as a "succession of steps upward from a sin-degraded state."¹ But this progressiveness was not always described so clearly. More often than not this experience was presented as a clean, instantaneous break with the old life.

The person who is truly in Christ is a new creature. He has renounced his old life of sin and unbelief, which was leading him down to death, and has chosen a life of obedience to the law of righteousness. He has left his former sinful course, and yielded himself to serve God instead of serving sin. He is a new creature; old things with him have passed away; all things have become new. He has become a servant to God, whose law he formerly transgressed, which made him a sinner.²

This emphasis on sanctification often included strong exhortation to overcome "every sin" and to "live out the whole truth." Bourdeau connected this notion with the close of probation in cause and effect relationship: "that we may be able to pass through the time of trouble without an intercessor, and be found of Christ without spot and blameless at his coming."³ Genuine conversion included a turn of the soul from sinful action and pursuit to a holy way—"a change in the mind, affections and conduct from sin to holiness, a radical reform."⁴

Ellen G. White emphasized the helplessness of man without God.⁵ The mind must be educated and the will must be exercised, but "ample" provisions are made by Christ to satisfy the soul that hungers and thirsts

¹Mrs. B. Ayers, "Conversion," RH 53:23 (June 5, 1879):178.

²R. F. Cottrell, "A New Creature," RH 57:24 (June 14, 1881):376-377.

³D. T. Bourdeau, "Advances of God's People," RH 29:11 (February 19, 1867):121-122.

⁴D. T. Bourdeau, "Conversion and Spiritual Life," RH 29:18 (April 9, 1867):209.

⁵See Ellen G. White, Testimonies, 2:132. She emphasizes the importance of daily growth in the Spirit of God.

for righteousness."¹ Those who cooperate to this end "can be translated and not be overwhelmed with the purity and transcendent glory of heaven."² Such growth can be attained on this earth, indeed must be.³

There was a general pervasive notion among SDA writers that the human sinful nature could be overcome through God's grace as one puts "forth an earnest, persevering effort."⁴ As Canright wrote in 1871, "only those who have withstood all temptations, overcome all their sins, and lived righteously before God" would be saved in heaven.⁵ Such gaining of control of the human nature was expressed in a number of ways: "complete control over every evil passion;"⁶ putting to death the carnal nature;⁷ no longer

¹Ibid., pp. 165-266.

²Ibid., p. 267.

³Ibid.

⁴A. M. A. Cornell wrote, "By nature the human heart is inclined to be the opposite of all that is amiable and lovely, but by the grace of God the evil traits may be subdued, and we may have our characters adorned with the previous graces described by the apostle. But we must realize that to overcome our evil habits and passions, we must put forth an earnest, persevering effort." "Come Unto Me," RH 31:12 (March 3, 1868):183.

⁵D. M. Canright, "If Satan Sinned in Heaven, May Not Others Also?" RH 37:5 (January 17, 1871):37. Emphasis supplied. See Ibid.: "They were full of infirmities themselves, weak and naturally sinful, with propensities tending to lead them away from God; all the influence of the world brought to bear against them; the powerful temptations of the devil and his angels, continually causing them doubts and fears; and yet under all these circumstances, they succeeded in overcoming their sins, and living holy and righteous lives before God."

⁶J. P. Henderson, "Character-Building," RH 7:35 (September 9, 1890):545-546. Henderson insisted that success in character-building was witnessed by "complete control of every evil passion, and by putting on Christ be made partakers of his nature." He likened the process to that of married couples who begin to look like each other in actions, words, tone of voice, and even physical features. "So by 'beholding' we become 'changed': and as we seek to follow our Exemplar, we grow in imitation until we become like him and 'shall see him as he is.' 1 John 3:2."

⁷A. L. Guilford, "Ye Are Bought with a Price," RH 16:21 (October 9, 1860):166-167. Guilford insists that one cannot glorify God until his carnal nature is dead. To glorify God is to obey God, hence by obeying one kills the carnal nature.

living in sin;¹ fighting one's way through;² and having the carnal mind "all removed."³

In his 1891 article on holiness, G. W. Draper criticized the view that man's sinful nature will remain in him until he puts on immortality. Such a theory, Draper insisted, was not the Scriptural teaching of holiness and dishonored God "by denying either his ability or his willingness to destroy the fruits of sin in his acknowledged children."⁴ However, he added that he was not teaching the attainment of "absolute" perfection (which included an inability to err in judgment) or freedom of temptation.

¹R. F. Cottrell, "Rom. VII," RH 27:20 (April 17, 1866):157-158. In Christ a person becomes dead to sin. "The person becomes dead to sin, by living no longer in it: sin is dead when it has lost its power and dominion over the person." Cottrell speaks much about the old man dying, the body of death, etc., which are hostile to God. Repentance is represented as the "death" of the "first husband," or the old man of sin.

²C. Monroe, "Ceaseless Prayer Again," RH 29:23 (May 14, 1867):267: "The natural man having much sin and no holiness in his heart, has no internal conflict, being left in possession of the former alone, there is nothing of the latter to dispute its claims. Hence he knows nothing of internal conflicts, the holy war within. Ps. lxxiii,5. Of this war, the apostle Paul knew much, as seen in Rom. vii., but he fought his way through, finished his course, and kept the faith, thus securing the victor's crown."

³J. H. Waggoner, "They Shall See God," RH 44:16 (October 13, 1874):124: "'The carnal mind,' the natural or unrenewed heart, 'is enmity against God.' But this may be all removed, and we be 'justified by faith,' so that we may have peace 'with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'" Waggoner explains that such removal involves a hatred for sin, a yielding to God without reserve and accepting his power of salvation. For other such expressions of overcoming, see M.E.S., "Message to the Laodiceans," RH 15:23 (April 26, 1860):178-179; "The Sabbath School—Lessons from the New Testament," RH 69:29 (July 19, 1892):462; A. T. Jones, "Free from the Service of Sin," RH 75:17 (April 26, 1898):268.

⁴G. W. Draper, "Holiness," RH 68:30 (July 28, 1891):467-468. Draper writes that it was Christ's work to destroy sin and that destruction must also include "man's sinful nature, his disposition to do evil." For Draper this is the meaning of the "law written on the heart." When men have been redeemed, "their sinful desires will have been completely eradicated." In an article by the same name in the next issue of the Review and Herald (68:31 [August 4, 1891]:482) he reiterates this theme: "Sanctification is the rooting out and destruction of the weeds of sin, giving room for the perfect growth of the heavenly plants."

"Holiness does not mean that we cannot sin, but that we do not, commit any conscious sin."¹

Propensities and passions were also perceived as controllable.² When the Spirit performs his work on the soul the feelings are softened, the propensities are changed, even brought into subjection, but the purifying takes a lifetime.³ Bragg explained this view:

We bear the cross when we crucify the inclination of the carnal heart. This is our work under the third angel's message, to bring the feelings and propensities of the natural heart into obedience to the commandments of God and faith of Jesus, on teaching of the New Testament.⁴

Christ's merits pay the "great debt," Bragg wrote, but one's only surety of these merits is received in bearing the cross. Then one's sins will be blotted out "at the times of refreshing."⁵ The penetration of God's love can even destroy the inclinations to sin.⁶ By the end of the century these expressions were refined and more adequately attractive, though no less

¹Ibid., p. 467.

²One definition given by an early SDA is that of E. Goodrich: "By the word passion are signified all the desires, appetites and impulses of the natural man, by which he is prompted to seek his own interest and happiness, regardless of others. For examples, we have pride, anger, fear, covetousness, yea, every thing that comes in contact with divine order may be regarded as passion." "Principle and Passion," RH 29:7 (January 22, 1867):74. In a second article on the topic, he elaborates, "Passion stands related to principle as creature objects to creative power, as circumstances to settled truth." See "Principle and Passion," RH 29:8 (January 29, 1867):85. Passion is temporal, principle is eternal. Passion consumes itself and its victims, principle is other-centered. "The history of the world is, that man has ever sought to reverse this order [of principle], by believing the truth to his own crooked, selfish purposes, and he worships and serves the creature instead of the Creator." In general, Goodrich sees passions as negative elements.

³F. M. Bragg, "Bearing the Cross," RH 21:9 (January 27, 1863):70-71. "Purifying" is to be understood from the Biblical standpoint of sanctification as "being set apart for a holy purpose."

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶O. Davis, "Baptism," RH 44:11 (September 1, 1874):83.

imprecise. Littlejohn wrote of the acceptance of the Christian faith as satisfying the cravings of the spiritual nature to the extent that the "sinful propensities are brought into subjection to the will and law of God; joy and hope spring up in his heart, and he at once represents a type of being as near perfection as any to which man can attain."¹

Romans 8 was viewed as a description of the overcoming life. In contrast to the experience of Rom 7, one should "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom 8:1). Those who continue to cling to the "body of death" (Rom 7:24) are in bondage but could be free through the new heart offered in Christ. However, God does not free a person until he forsakes his sins and asks for pardon. The freedom that comes is described as "to the uttermost bounds of human necessity."²

Some post-1888 writers pushed this view of overcoming to its limit. E. R. Jones insisted that "complete deliverance from inherited and indwelling sin" was to be an actuality in the life.³ When the Spirit of God works in a person he delivers him from "inherited evil." The Scriptures teach, Jones insisted, that nothing short of the "complete transformation of vile man" should be expected.⁴ Jones quotes Ellen White:

Human nature is vile, and man's character must be changed before it can harmonize with the pure and holy in God's immortal kingdom. This transformation is the new birth.⁵

¹W. H. Littlejohn, "Justification by Faith," RH 69:32 (August 9, 1892):499.

²M. Enoch, "Romans 7 and 8," RH 60:26 (June 26, 1883):405. Cf. G. C. Tenney, "The State of Romans 7," RH 73:10 (March 10, 1896):153.

³E. R. Jones, "Born of God," p. 434.

⁴Ibid., p. 435.

⁵Ibid., quoting Ellen White, Great Controversy, p. 133 [1888 ed.]. Cf. E. R. Jones, "The Law and Sin" and "In the Flesh."

For J. H. Cook, who held that man had lost his life and "divine nature" and become satanic in nature, the answer corresponds to the problem: If man is satanic in nature then he must become divine—thus the divine nature is "planted" in the soul at the new birth. Man is "born of the Spirit" upon his justification by faith in Christ. From that point on he is expected to obey. Cook's emphasis was on the miracle of the new birth not upon the method or the accomplishment itself.¹

By the same token William T. Case explained the change as such:

The change that is wrought by this crucifixion [of self] is entirely and altogether within ourselves. It does not change sin, in either its nature or its results; it does not change the world around us; but it changes our relation to all these things (Read Ga. 5:24).²

The flesh must die, it must be crucified, it must be mortified, etc. Christ died to make it possible, but this is as explanatory as Case gets. In this, Case and Cook are representative of Adventist trends until A. T. Jones' extensive writings on the subject. They are largely imprecise theologically but expressed themselves in simple Biblical language. It is not unusual for an SDA writer of this period to rely heavily on Scriptural language—whole texts, parts of texts, words from texts.³

The carnal mind cannot keep the commandments, but the spiritual mind can, wrote Thomas H. Gibbs, and this can be done now. This rules out views that would say (1) the commandments cannot be kept; (2) the commandments cannot be kept now, or (3) commandment-keeping can only be attempted. Any failure to keep them is evidence of residual carnality

¹J. H. Cook, "Necessity of the New Birth," p. 18.

²Wm. T. Case, "The Cross of Christ," RH 67:33 (August 26, 1890):514.

³See *ibid.*, and C. P. Whitford, "An Open Letter," pp. 515-516, as examples.

in the heart, and such pockets of sinfulness must be removed before the commandments can be successfully kept.¹ The hymn expressed it well:

Break off the yoke of inbred sin,
and fully set my spirit free;
I cannot rest till pure within,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.²

Gibbs qualified this to mean "open violation of the law," but he insisted that man today can "live without sin." Yet he maintained that this was neither "absolute perfection," "sinless perfection," nor "Adamic perfection."³ Rather it was to be termed "moral or spiritual perfection," that which was promised by grace through faith in Jesus—sanctification and obedience. It is complete obedience and is included in the "new man" that is put on. Gibbs is no more explicit than this. He does not explore the experiential frustration that may come to one whose evil habits or actions reoccur. However, here is a typical approach of the last decade.⁴

The state between carnality and conversion, a state illustrated in Rom 7, was a topic with which G. C. Tenney attempted to deal.⁵ He argues

¹Thomas H. Gibbs, "Can We Keep the Commandments?" RH 67:35 (September 9, 1890):548.

²Ibid.

³Ibid. Note Gibbs' helpful definitions: "We do not mean to teach [1] absolute perfection; this alone belongs to God; nor [2] sinless perfection, for then man could not sin, and his free moral agency would be at an end; nor [3] Adamic perfection, for we have sinned, and have its taint to contend with; but moral and spiritual perfection enjoined and promised in the Scriptures by grace through faith as the gift of God in the cleansing of the atoning 'blood of Jesus' (1 John 1:7), the 'sanctification of the Holy Spirit' (Rom. 15:16), and obedience to the truth. John 17:17." Emphasis supplied.

⁴See further: Otho C. Godsmark, "God's Word in Us," RH 68:31 (August 4, 1891):481-483; Wm. Covert, "Eternal Life," RH 68:32 (August 11, 1891):498-499; W. H. Falconer, "The Source of Defilement," RH 71:48 (December 4, 1894):755.

⁵G. C. Tenney, "The State of Romans 7," RH 73:10 (March 10, 1896):153. While not wishing to classify this as the converted state, Tenney recognized it as one in which one wishes to be better than he is but one in

that only total mortification of the "law of sin and death" in one's members will eliminate this state and that anyone finding himself in this condition should know that the work of conversion has only been partially done. Tenney describes such Christians as "neither dormant in sin nor free in Jesus Christ" and finds the answer to such a state in "the indwelling Christ."¹

It is sin, and sin only, that produces death. The law of God is spiritual, and in Jesus Christ it becomes the law of the spirit of life. The law of God is not a bloody instrument of death, whose only office is to execute the sinner. There is life in God's word. While sin takes advantage of the law to slay the sinner, the indwelling Christ makes that glorious law the avenue of life and liberty.²

which many Christians find themselves all too often. "We should say," he wrote, "that [in this state] the work of conversion is but partially done for them." He admits that SDAs are found in this state "by the score." The serious issue implied in the question Tenney is addressing concerns the predicament in which the conscientious Christian finds himself when he has followed the admonitions to stop sinning and yet continues to sin. Tenney's simple answer to this is that his conversion is only partial and that he must have something more.

¹Abrogating the importance of the ten commandments is not the legitimate answer to this state, argues Tenney. Rather it is the complete mortification of the law of sin and death. "This law of sin is an unwritten law, originating from Satan and binding with irresistible force upon every victim of the evil one. While under that law, we may resolve and try, and struggle, and cry; but it is of no avail. The evil we will do, the good we cannot do. Nothing but death can break the force of that law; and even that will not do it." Ibid. But such death in this life must be done through Christ. How this is accomplished Tenney does not precisely explain except by suggesting that the law of God be lived out in the life—somehow this is the indwelling Christ: "it is life, spiritual life, that makes us free from death. That life is in Christ Jesus. That law of life is the law of God." Ibid.

²Tenney ends his article with this paragraph and apparently assumes there is no further explanation necessary. He holds out the same hope for total deliverance from sin in this life as E. R. Jones who wrote several years earlier that "true conversion is composed of two parts: first, the forgiveness of all personal sins; this is called justification; second, the complete deliverance from all inherited or indwelling sin. . . . Justification, or forgiveness of sins, changes the individual's relation to the law, but does not produce any radical change in him. By it the guilt of sin is taken away. But when the Spirit of God works in a man (Col. 1:29; Heb. 13:21), to deliver him from the power of sin, the inherited evil, to make him a new creature in Christ—how great and marvelous the change now wrought!" ("Born of God," RH 66:28 [July 9, 1889]:434-435).

Building on the same notion, S. Theo. H. Berry was more explicit with regard to the indwelling Christ. The word of God—"his thought, or mind, or will"—is in the Christian. This is the "living, holy Saviour, the living Word."¹ David serves as an example of how this is done: "He kept God's thoughts; and thus God's thoughts were his own by faith."² The mind must therefore be uncluttered of sin.

When a man has the mind of Christ, he cannot sin; he cannot agree with God, and wilfully, knowingly, purposely sin. He can, if he chooses, just as Adam did, willingly go into disobedience and condemnation; but he need not; he cannot be forced to. If he does, it is all on his own part to please the evil spirit. . . . When I sin, it is because I willingly obey Satan's thought, which is contrary to God's word. When we sin, we are not abiding in God; for 'whosoever abideth in him sinned not.'³

Berry is careful to lay responsibility for sin on the individual sinner. For him Christ was not a mystical presence in the heart so much as an analogical presence in the form of God's principles. The Apostle John's teaching was that on this side of the close of human probation Christians "should not sin."⁴ However, recognizing that sinlessness was not guaranteed,

¹S. Theo. H. Berry, "The Growth of Sin in the Heart, and Its Cure. 1 John 3:16," *RH* 73:14 (April 7, 1896):210. Since sin begins in the heart, overcoming sin must start with the heart. Even Adam's sin began in his heart—he first of all accepted an evil thought. "Sin exists in the heart; life flows from the heart, from the thoughts in the heart. It has its beginning there. Temptation starts in the mind. Before a man can sin, he must have a thought contrary to God's law, or word, in his heart, as a germ of evil. Adam, before he sinned, accepted an evil thought, then acted in harmony with it. He was pure till he yielded, and became poisoned by sin and the germs of death.

²*Ibid.* Berry argues that it was at the moment of Adam's sin that God departed: "When he [Adam] accepted the devil's thoughts and carried them out by act, he acted out Satan; for Satan was with him then in act. The moment Satan by the spirit of thought entered Adam, that moment God departed. . . . [Adam] sinned because the seed of God,—his word, thought, mind,—did not remain in him. So it is written, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him.'"

³*Ibid.*

⁴The same notion is found in Ellen White's thought: "Holiness is

Berry closes his article with the gospel hope that "we need not despair of mercy, for 'if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.'"¹

A more mystical approach to the indwelling Christ was that of W. W. Prescott:

As Christ was twice born,—once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human in that second birth,—so we who have been born once already in the flesh, are to have the second birth, being born again of the Spirit, in order that our experience may be the same,—the human and the divine being joined in a life union.²

Man has as much salvation as he has of Christ, Prescott argued, and he is saved just so far as he has Christ "dwelling in" him. This constitutes his salvation. Without Christ dwelling in the Christian there is no righteousness. The description of the Apostle in Gal 2:20 regarding the living out of Christ's life "in me" is to be taken literally. This indwelling Christ is a kind of infused grace.³

Prescott pursues his expression of Christ's indwelling in one of his editorials as follows:

wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of the heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven" (Desire of Ages, p. 556. Emphasis supplied).

¹Berry, "Growth of Sin," p. 210: "The Bible does not teach the absolute impossibility of the commission of sin upon the part of the child of God. As long as we are on probation, we may fall. Angels fell; and so did Adam. But our Creator, who made all the worlds and holds them in existence, can save us insignificant mortals from sin. If he cannot, there is no hope for us." Berry is speaking of the power of sin here. And while he sees the hope of a freedom from all known and wilful sin, he also demonstrates an understanding of Scripture when he encourages those who are converted but who fall—they have an advocate who provides a forgiveness that is constant. Breaking sin's power, mortifying the control is part of the hope of the Christian. But occasional falls or mistakes are to be expected.

²W. W. Prescott, "The Christ for To-day," RH 73:15 (April 14, 1896):232.

³Ibid.: "Now to make possible in us the very life that Jesus Christ lived in the flesh, there must be the indwelling presence. He himself must be the power; he himself must live the life."

The purpose of our body of flesh is that we may express ourselves through it. . . . Christ dwelt in a body just like ours; but instead of using that body to express himself, he simply used it to express God's self. So the words he spoke were God's words; the actions that he wrought were wrought in him by the Father, and his will was to do the Father's will, and that the Father should be expressed in him.¹

Hence, submission is surrender to Christ "in us" just as Christ surrendered to the Father "in him." Through this means Christ lives out himself in man and the same life "that Christ lived himself" is made possible in the believer. This Prescott calls the "life of victory,"² a theme that would become popular among SDAs in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Christ's living a life on earth for us is not a forensic concept in Prescott's thought but rather a kind of feat which Christ performed in order to qualify himself to live that life in man.³ Now Christ works daily in the intercessory work and thus: "The Christ for to-day is the one who lives in us, and works in us." Not to recognize and teach this truth is to

¹W. W. Prescott, "The Life for To-day," RH 73:16 (April 21, 1896):248.

²Ibid. "Christ by his spirit dwells in the inner life, and the organs of sense are used to give expression to his words and acts. We submit everything, that he shall express himself in our life. That is the Christian life. This life is made possible to us from the fact that that was the very life that Christ lived himself. He wrought into humanity a divine life. The life which he imparts unto us for living this life, is the resurrection life, the life of victory." Prescott explains that such a life involves keeping God's law—that because Jesus kept it in his humanity we can keep it in his humanity. Indeed, this was the very purpose of his becoming man.

³Ibid., "The law of God comes to us as a law which has been fulfilled in his flesh, that with our consent, by our yielding, that fulfilled law may rule in our lives, and that which was fulfilled in Christ for us may be fulfilled by Christ in us. . . . It was fulfilled in him, that it might be fulfilled in us." Prescott does write of Christ as our substitute and representative, but the purpose of his work as such was to perfect righteousness in man. Christ's work was not completed on earth but continues today in the heavenly sanctuary. Christ is thus "for to-day" as one who lives and works "in us." This dynamic aspect of the work of Christ is seen by Prescott as a living alternative to the simple notion of copying Christ who set an example 1900 years ago. Those who hold the latter view "lose the very heart and soul of Christian experience."

engender weakness of living and a mere form of godliness.¹

In summary, Adventists expressed repeatedly the importance of recognizing that justification for sins of the past was not enough. One must also see the importance of breaking the power of sin in the life. Overcoming is to be an experiential reality.

The discussion of "overcoming" in SDA theology adds perspective on the SDA understanding of the power of sin. For Adventists this power could be overcome in the life. Whatever man inherits from Adam in terms of power is conquerable through Christ. There were times when "overcoming" seemed to be expressed in terms of sinless perfection. However in those cases, "sinless" was used in reference to (a) external or actual sin, (b) deliberate or wilful sin, (c) relative perfection, or (d) power over sin—

¹Many of the articles of the 1890s stress these points as Prescott did. D. E. Lindsey wrote, "No state of grace admits of committing sin. 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.' We may well say that the minimum of salvation is salvation from sinning, [external acts], and the maximum of salvation is salvation from pollution—the inclination to sin. . . . To commit sin after justification, is to forfeit the justification, with all its attendant blessings; and we can retain our justification only with a strong and honest intention to obey the commandments of God" ("The Goodness of God," RH 73:20 [May 19, 1896]:307). Lindsey makes a distinction between wilful sin and mistakes. Mistakes are covered by the Advocate. Sanctification involves a "change of disposition, or heart." Christians need not only freedom from guilt but also freedom from the power of sin. This theme permeates the writers of the 1890s. There is a much deeper understanding of the radical nature of sin—it pollutes, it controls, it leads to perdition and it must be and can be broken through the indwelling Christ—the living of the principles of God found in his law by the power of the supernatural action of the Spirit. For further study on this emphasis during the last years of the 1890s, see (1) by G. C. Tenney: "Christ the Resurrection," RH 73:22 (June 2, 1896):344; "Righteousness by Faith," RH 73:38 (September 22, 1896):604; "The Knowledge of Evil," RH 73:39 (September 29, 1896):620; "Human Nature," RH 74:13 (March 30, 1897):202-203; "Righteousness by Faith," RH 73:41 (October 13, 1896):653-654; (2) by A. T. Jones, "Who Shall Be Glorified?" RH 73:37 (September 15, 1897):588-589; "Ministers of God," RH 73:39 (September 29, 1896):621; "A Question and the Answer," RH 76:11 (March 14, 1899):169-170; "Editorial," RH 76:16 (April 18, 1899):248-249; "Christian Perfection," RH 76:30, 31 (July 25, August 1, 1899):471-472, 487-488); "Studies in Galatians," RH 76:43, 45 (October 24, November 7, 1899):684-685, 721.

the old man being "kept down" and not allowed to control. There was no open espousal of the notion of sinless perfection this side of the parousia. 1 John 3:9 presented its own unique problems, especially in the earlier days of SDA theological expression; but with the discovery of the Greek nuances, SDA writers understood the doctrine of the new birth from a spiritual standpoint, that is, in reference to victory over pursuing a life of habitual sin.

Timothy L. Smith has analyzed the doctrine of sanctification in American Methodism of the nineteenth century as follows:

The progress of this new life was hindered, . . . by the remains of the carnal nature within, the "seed" of sin, a bent toward evil perhaps most clearly described as a diseased condition of the soul. Wesley thus considered original sin to be not so much guilt for Adam's transgression as a sinful condition stemming from it. He was less concerned with theological diagnosis of the malady than with declaring God's readiness to heal it . . .¹

This statement adequately describes the SDA concerns as well. Emphasis was placed on overcoming, victory, and successful Christian living rather than on the depth of the sin problem.

With regard to man's present state, in general, there was an SDA cognizance of a two-fold consequence to Adam's sin which Christ had to solve in his work of redemption: (1) physical or actual death, as cessation of life (death being the penalty of Adam's sin); and (2) sinfulness, or the introduction of the reign of sin in an evil age (sinfulness being the consequence of Adam's sin). SDAs struggled theologically in their attempts to be Biblical and realistic. Increasingly they found that struggle requiring of them more precise statements on hamartiology and soteriology. The discussions on righteousness by faith in the latter end of the nineteenth century required a greater degree of theological finesse than the simpler

¹Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform; American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 114.

expressions of conditionalism. And while other Protestants had struggled with these same issues using the term original sin, not always in the sense of original guilt, but in the sense of inclination, propensity, depravity, and lostness, SDAs did not follow their example. They used rather the more Biblical terms in harmony with their epistemology. "Original sin" remained a term simply to designate Adam's transgression.

General Summary

On the basis of N. P. Williams' outline for the analyzing of a doctrine of original sin,¹ the findings of this research regarding the SDA view of Adam's sin and its relationship to his posterity (from 1850-1900) can be summarized as follows:

1. In SDA literature the Adam-story is considered an accurate, historical account of the creation and fall of man. There is not the slightest question raised against this point, and polemics directed at those who would question this are not unusual. While Adam is occasionally considered a type of perfect man, such a designation is understood not from a mythological but from a typological point of view. The same is true for figurative depictions of the tree of life.

Not only do Adventists categorically state their faith in the historicity of Genesis, their uncritical treatment of the Biblical material on Adam and Eve (Adam is understood to be genetic head of the human race), creation (in seven literal days), and the fall (with the serpent story) show a pervasiveness of these sentiments—from their elaborations of the literal paradise to the depictions of the earthly restoration of the literal tree of life which now resides in heaven.

¹Williams, Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, pp. xvi, 165ff.

In taking this literalistic position SDAs were working in harmony with their stated epistemology: "the Bible only is our creed," and "Biblical language is best for the delineation of Biblical doctrine." This historical approach to Adam and Eve is interrelated with SDA understandings pertaining to creation, marriage, and the Sabbath, and constitutes an integral part of wholistic Adventist theology.

2. Man's unfallen condition was first of all one of neutrality with regard to his physical being: he was neither mortal nor immortal but had the capability of becoming either depending on his passing of the probationary moral test. Hence immortality was not considered a part of the imago Dei. When man failed the probationary test, i.e., disobeyed God in the garden, he lost the promise of immortality and became by nature dying.

By the same token man was created without character, i.e., morally neutral, since character is not a creatable substance, but is rather dependent wholly upon the relational response of the creature to a person or norm (standard, law) given by the Creator. The view that man was created with original righteousness (either spiritual maturity or superadded gifts) was not part of the SDA understanding of the Scriptural account. That Adam did not pass the most elementary test—one which sinners would have little difficulty passing—testifies not to his weakness or imperfection, but to his immaturity. The nature of the Edenic test itself witnesses to his undeveloped state of innocence.

The original relationship of man with God would have guaranteed against sin's allurements had it continued. Man was holy and innocent in his original middle, or neutral, state, but he was not righteous (this distinction is carefully recognized and maintained).

3. The undesirable element that Adam handed down to his posterity was death. In his failing of the moral test in Eden, Adam handed on a dying nature to his posterity. In the earliest expressions of SDA thought the emphasis was placed on death as cessation of life. Conditionalism was the major issue and Rom 5:12 was read with this emphasis: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." The earliest concerns were largely stated in the arguments and language of George Storrs who had guided Adventism in its acceptance of the conditionalist doctrine. Adam "bequeathed" this death (through his sin) to his posterity.

SDAs differed on the nature of death with many of their Protestant counterparts. They held that while spiritual death (in the form of the carnal nature, the old man of sin, sinful propensities, the "law of sin and death," etc.) is also a legacy of Adam's sin, it is more Biblical to see this as a consequence rather than a penalty for his transgression. Death was to be understood according to Biblical distinctions which SDAs perceived as teaching a first and a second death; the former in reference to man's temporal death in consequence of Adam's sin ("Adamic sin," "original sin"), the latter in reference to man's eternal death in penalty of one's actual sins ("personal sin"). Rejecting the Calvinistic schema of the Westminster Confession, SDAs insisted that responsibility for sin resides in the action of the individual will and that Adam's sin is one for which he is held eternally responsible not his posterity. All die because of Adam, the head and representative of the human race, but no one is punished because of Adam's sin.

Likewise the depraved nature is the result of the separation of the race caused by Adam's sin but is not a state for which man is held responsible. What he does in his depravity decides man's eternal destiny.

It seems to be helpful to see the SDA definition of depravity as paralleling that of the New Haven thought of Nathaniel Taylor, also a popular theological view of depravity in New England at the time. Depravity was not considered properly called sin but rather was the natural bent or inclination of man to sin. A distinction was made between nature and inclination. In his separation from God through Adam's sin, man became the center of undoneness and carnality. While some SDA writers stressed a radical view of man's sinful nature in such a way that it appears "satanic" most seem not to be as concerned with exploring the depths of man's sin as they are with stressing the message of God's deliverance and the possibility of overcoming.

As a clue to the SDA meaning of depravity, their treatment of the nature of Christ is helpful. Christ is presented as having a human nature like that of post-Fall man. However, SDA writers seek to preserve two aspects of the message of Christ's incarnation in this respect: (1) his qualification to be Savior (redemption), and (2) his qualification to be priest (example). SDAs found encouragement in the fact that Christ was made "in the likeness of sin" but explicit evidence from SDA sources demonstrates that Adventists did not believe, nor did they wish to convey the idea, that Christ was in anyway guilty of sin.

4. The mode of transmission of the results of Adam's sin was most frequently explained, especially in the earlier days, in realistic terms—the natural inheritance of death from Adam. The Adventist wholistic anthropology tended to find expression along traducian lines rather than creationistic (although this theological terminology does not precisely fit the Adventist wholistic view of the soul). The most frequent articulation of this view was in the words: Adam could not give his posterity a nature which he did not possess, i.e., an undying nature.

As Adventist theology neared the end of the century there was a shift to a greater emphasis on the spiritual aspects of Adam's legacy. In dealing with the issues relating to righteousness by faith, Adventists tended to be imprecise with regard to the transmission. The language of three modes—realism, imitation, and imputation—were employed, but none is dominant enough to classify as a typical SDA approach. Rather, aside from the natural transmission of the dying nature, explaining the mode of transmission is not a major concern of Adventism.

5. In the earliest SDA expression, the present state of man, due to Adam's sin, was explained as "the dying nature." This constituted the problem which God must solve in the plan of salvation. The state of sin, the condition of sin, the sinful nature, were all ways of saying that Adam introduced a nature that literally dies in every way: "dying thou shalt die."

Initially this period saw the "new birth" as the first resurrection that would finally restore absolute sinlessness, the inability to sin (based on Uriah Smith's interpretation of 1 John 3:9). Having generally accepted their view of Adam's sin from the conditionalism of Storrs, SDAs found it natural to seek a physical answer to man's physical problem of death. But this view underwent a major revision during the decades of the 1860s and 1870s so that by the close of that period the "new birth" was seen as a spiritual conversion which finally culminates in the first resurrection.

Change in the outlook on the new birth brought added implications for soteriology. The marring of the imago Dei included damage to the spiritual capacity of man. The mission of Christ was defined in greater detail—from the viewpoint of his conquering death and eradicating sin in the believer. "Overcoming" thus became a crucial issue and SDAs attempted

to elucidate what "power over sin" and "mortification of the old man" meant in experiential terms.

Propensities, carnality, depravity were never specifically referred to as properly called sin but they were clearly seen as part of the legacy stemming from Adam's original sin. They are conquerable, i.e., they can be mortified, they can die. The expressions varied among SDA writers but perfection was always qualified as "relative" this side of the parousia. Christ's work included conquering death and winning the right to restore man. Particularly toward the end of the period was this later notion emphasized. While the carnal mind, or the old man of sin, is an experiential reality, dominion over it can be achieved in this life. However, this "dominion over" manifests itself in obedience to God, and actual sin in each believer's life continually alienates him from God. This alienation is taken care of by daily confession and repentance which manifests itself in good works and adherence to the law.

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE: CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

The Biblical writers present man as being something less than God intended him to be, due to the introduction of sin to the human race. The doctrine of original sin seeks to understand the implications involved. "Original sin" is commonly understood as: (1) guilt inherited from Adam, the generic and federal head of the race; and/or (2) inherited, sinful tendencies resident in human nature because of Adam's sin.

Historical models representing attempts of Christian theologians to explain the Biblical data include: (1) the Irenaean, or early eastern; (2) the Tertullian, or early western; 3) the Pelagian; (4) the Augustinian; (5) the Tridentine, or medieval Roman Catholic; and (6) the Reformation and post-Reformation.

Seventh-day Adventism was born in the milieu of the second Great Awakening, after a long debate over the doctrine of original sin in Puritan America. There is a line of development from the English Enlightenment thought of John Taylor through the conditionalism of George Storrs to the Advent movement. SDAs acquired a hamartiology similar to the New Haven theologians who, in their reaction to Calvinistic Federal theology, viewed man's inheritance as neither his responsibility nor properly called sin.

The earliest SDA expression of the effects of Adam's sin was particularly related to their conditionalism. Adam's sin brought literal

death to the human race. But there was a development and adaptation of this notion so that it gradually broadened to meet the theological issues that Adventism faced in its maturing expression of thought. By the end of the century, the SDA doctrine included the view that Adam's sin not only resulted in mortality for his progeny but brought inherited depravity and sinful propensities, though neither was properly called sin.

During the earliest decades of the period, SDAs employed the term "original sin" as an identification of the actual sin of Adam. It was connected specifically to the legacy of physical death left to the race by Adam. But man's depravity was not identified by the term. Instead, related terms were used (carnality, "old man," depravity, "first husband," "law of sin and death," the natural man, etc.) to convey the notion of man's inherent sinfulness. This was partially due to the SDA preference for Scriptural terminology. But it is also true that SDAs had accepted the form and terminology of Storrs' argument as well as his view. SDAs cautiously modified and expanded Storrs' approach, but his assault on the Westminster view of depravity remained substantially unchanged, and "original sin" was never adopted to convey their understanding of man's sinful inheritance.

Theological Considerations

From the critical perspective of the theological task one must recognize that the early Adventists postured themselves neither as schoolmen nor as trained systematic theologians, but as simple Bible-believing Christians who were concerned about certain aspects of truth. At times they expressed incisive criticism of theology when they felt it had tended to distort what they perceived as "present truth." Particularly was this true in areas they perceived to be practical or crucial to the believer's relationship to God,

e.g., the keeping of all the commandments. But it also included more theologically abstract areas such as man's original, inherited, or future condition. These truths were important because they provided man his identity, purpose, and goals.

The Theological Task

It is often the case that one's criticism of the theological task is issued while in the process of performing that very task. With the SDA pioneers this did in fact occur. But to aid in properly understanding the early SDAs, one should recognize that they perceived their criticizing of the theological task not as eroding truth but as protecting it.

When the Pharisees confronted Jesus (regarding his softness on adhering strictly to Jewish traditions) with their interrogation, "Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" Jesus inquired of them in return, "Why do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" (Matthew 15:2-3). The SDA pioneers perceived themselves as engaged in the task of fulfilling the practical implications of this mandate of Christ. While they were critical of theologians, they functioned as theologians in the process. Appreciation for the fact that such criticism was somewhat of a hobby in the New England of the day can temper one's tendencies to be intolerant of the pioneers' intolerance.

It is also true that corrective theology was of primary concern to the early SDAs. They sought to strengthen certain positions they perceived as having been lost or distorted by the church in its "great apostasy" of the Middle Ages. But they did so from a desire to reach a primitive Biblical faith which they believed to be essentially wholistic. Where theologians could help in that task the SDAs welcomed their statements.

The pioneers' approach underscores the principle that tradition is neither to take the place of truth nor to impede progress toward discovering new expressions of it. For them, truth was dynamic, progressive, relevant, and ever unfolding. Unaided reason was not to usurp it. Creeds were not to overshadow it. Tradition was ever to be subjected to its scrutiny. In spite of this critical approach SDAs absorbed a great deal from their spiritual surroundings. Thus their modeling tempers their words.

Given their lack of formal training in theological methods, the pioneers leave much to be commended in their treatment of original sin. (1) They demonstrate a respectable degree of precise expression in their presentations. (2) They display a remarkable understanding of major issues and an appreciation for the interdependencies of ideas. (3) They show an awareness of contemporary (and to some degree historical) issues. (4) They usually qualify and define their terms adequately for their discussion. (5) They generally interpret Scripture in a manner consistent with widely accepted hermeneutical principles. (6) They are aware of the Biblical reticence to ascribe autonomy to unaided human reason and their remarks faithfully adhere to that proscription. (7) Their arguments represent a notable degree of logical continuity. While one would not suggest that these writers considered themselves professional systematic theologians, it is fair to assert that such qualities strengthen their credibility as religious writers.

There is a practical tone to their writings which demonstrates a radical concern for living in anticipation of the parousia. Their hope of an imminent escape from this evil age dominates their thought. Abstraction is minimal. They were more concerned about the answer than the depth of the problem. They seem convinced that most Christians were more acquainted with the problem than with a proper approach to the answer.

The Content of the Doctrine

Of crucial concern to the systematic theologian is the adequacy of a doctrine to meet generally accepted Biblical standards.

John Hick presents six points which represent "a wide measure of agreement among Pauline commentators" with respect to Paul's view of the Fall and its effects: (1) Adam's sin brought death to the entire race both physically and spiritually. (2) The experience of death by the race is understood in terms of corporate solidarity with Adam as the causative factor. (3) Sin and death have come to humanity in the form of a tendency to sin which is part of an inherited psycho-physical make-up. (4) Inherited tendency causes actual sin. (5) As these maladies came through one man—Adam—they are abolished through one man—Christ. (6) Evil spirits add to the work of evil human beings.¹

A comparison to Hick's points shows the credibility of the early SDA view. The pioneers considered the following components crucial:

1. God is in no way responsible for sin. Any such suggestion either creates the perception that God is an impossible tyrant or transforms sin into righteousness. The first option presents a metaphysical and an evangelistic problem; the second produces a philosophical problem. Sin as part of God's plan would make it a part of his will. On this basis the pioneers categorically denied Calvinistic determinism.

2. Man is responsible for human sin. The blame for racial sin lay on Adam's shoulders. At creation Adam could go either way—good or bad. He was created neutral. But in his free will, Adam had the capacity (though not the reason) to rebel. He was the father from two standpoints: (1) the

¹Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 206. See in this study, pp. 52-53.

federal representative of the race, and (2) the generic source. Satan is recognized as the originator of sin in the universe, but Adam is the source of human sin through yielding to the devil's instigation. Theologically, sin is preserved as revolt against the divine; ontologically and morally, God is preserved as wholly other with regard to this malignant intruder.

3. The sinfulness of sin is perceived in both its nature and its effect. In nature it is life-destroying and rooted in human pride and selfishness. In effect it has produced an estrangement and perversity which results in death and depravity. Sin has a radical nature which makes Adamic perfection impossible. While regeneration brings control over sin, only resurrection or glorification restores man to the Edenic state. Personal sin issues from the nature inherited from Adam.

4. Man is in a state of helplessness apart from God. However, Augustinian determinism is not the theological solution to this helplessness. Both the sovereignty of God and the freedom of man to make meaningful moral choices must be preserved. Depravity dictates man's need of salvation so that God's activity is an absolute necessity on both the cosmic level (the legal aspects of the Atonement) and the personal level (the correction of experiential or personal rebellion). Depravity is viewed as helplessness rather than guilt. God preserves his integrity by empowering man not, by predestinating him.

5. Sin is relational not substantial (chromosomal). But in taking this position the early SDAs recognized the consequences of a life separated from God in physical terms largely on the level of imitation. Distorted perceptions produce skewed values. From an inherently twisted value system physical consequences have issued to Adam's offspring. Yet the temptation to judge these effects as punishments for sin is resisted in these SDA writers.

6. Original sin is not inherited guilt. The SDA pioneers often deny the validity of the Augustinian notion of inherited guilt. They seek to preserve the justice and mercy of God. To view him as holding one responsible for another's actual sin denies God's basic justice in light of his own inspired principle: "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Storr's *frontal assault on the Westminster view of depravity* is perhaps the most forthright of the Adventist attacks. The absence of further such attacks probably indicates that Adventists were influenced more by Biblical material than by historical debates. At any rate, open debate of the issue did not become crucial to them until the discussions on righteousness of faith which demanded new attention. At that point inherited guilt was neither the notion nor the terminology they adopted. It did not fit their view of God's dealings with man as a free moral agent.

7. The Genesis story as history is an integral part of the correct understanding of man's sin problem. SDAs maintained that to mythologize the story of Adam's Fall would erode the most credible source man has regarding his origin and sin problem.

8. The plan of salvation as carried out through the work of the Incarnation and Atonement of Christ is the single answer to the sin problem of man. In this SDAs presented a conservative, literalistic view of Christ's salvific work not unlike that of their Arminian contemporaries. But regardless of the exact interpretation of these activities of God, the point was clear: Adam's Fall demanded divine intervention for the entire race.

9. The sinlessness of Christ must be maintained in order to preserve the Lord's dual role as Savior and example. In their earliest expressions the SDAs placed emphasis on the justifying work of Christ, perhaps in harmony with their strong emphasis on law. Toward the end of the period

there was increasing emphasis placed on the idea of example. Because of these emphases it could be argued convincingly that at times the early SDAs exaggerated their descriptions of Christ's human nature in their efforts to encourage struggling saints. If "human nature" was indeed what G. C. Tenney claimed (see in this study, p. 34: "Human nature is essentially earthly, sensual, devilish, . . . What we possess of it is just so much of Satan in us"), one can wonder how Christ could assume such a nature and be preserved as the spotless Savior. Tenney postulated that Christ's human nature was "swallowed up" in devotion to God. In spite of this unconvincing suggestion, Tenney's desire to preserve Christ in his redeemer role is significant for it represents the general concern of the early Adventists.

This consensus of early SDA belief provides convincing evidence that, given their conservative set of hermeneutical principles, the early Adventists did hold a position that is supported by the Biblical material.

Historical Considerations

Regardless of how importunate spiritual leaders or confessing groups may be in their claims to hold a purely Biblical theology, the fact still holds that theology is not formed in a vacuum. Scripture is often cited to support beliefs that are considered strange by the church at large, and those espousing these views commonly lay claim to special insight. In such cases historical study adds some necessary perspectives. There is an objective quality that historical inquiry brings to the theological debate. The phenomena involved in the formulation of doctrine, the action and reaction, the dissonance and resolution—these are factors that help to determine how a confessing body has received, constructed, or been influenced to accept its particular doctrine.

The Dynamic of Progressive Understanding

The expressions and emphases of a doctrine are influenced by existential phenomena, just as it is by the desire for Biblical and doctrinal purity. Even the desire to seek a primitive faith can be a part of the phenomena of the context. That Dietrich Bonhoeffer, for example, became a great *social theologian in Nazi Germany* and tested his pacifism in the crucible of trial was very much a result of situations which brought his position to the test. Where the ideals of his theology may have led, without that particular situation to contribute to its development, is difficult to predict. Again, Augustine and Pelagius are often analyzed in their historical situation. Augustine, with his self-confessed propensities; Pelagius with his iron-like will power employed to do good—both brought a subjective context to their theology that the historian must recognize if he is to understand fully the theology of either.

In this study, as already mentioned, the evidence points to the fact that Adventism inherited from Storrs at least the argument, method, and vocabulary of its initial treatment of Adam's sin and its effect on his posterity. Such Adventists as J. N. Loughborough, Uriah Smith, and Albert Stone repeated Stott's arguments frequently, until they died or the century ended. But it is also important to recognize that while SDAs started with these arguments, they did not confine their expressions to them. They re-defined, re-thought, and refined the old arguments to fit the theological crises they faced in their more current debates. There was a dynamic, interpretive process at work in Adventism that continued to re-evaluate—a kind of resistance to tradition while at the same time retaining the important elements of it. This factor must be recognized by those who would tend to see Adventism as monolithic in belief or as stagnating in tradition. The

debate over the pros and cons of credalism was deeply concerned with this question of how to relate to tradition. A maturing process, built into their view of understanding, was expressed in SDA thought as "progressive [understanding of] revelation" and "present truth." At the heart of the SDA spirit was the interest to experiment with the new without throwing over the old—the tried and true. Certain hermeneutical limits always dictated the parameters of such a process.

Elements of the SDA treatment of Adamic sin can be traced to nuances and teachers in the Christian tradition. But the most direct are those influences of New England. The invasion of Federal theology by the enlightenment thought of Locke and Taylor has been cited above as two examples. The debate over original sin in New England left certain positions open to question. The American milieu witnessed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century revivalism, the filtering of theology through the popular Methodist, Baptist, and Congregationalist pulpits of the American preacher-theologians to the common people, the traditions out of which the Advent believers came (Methodist, Christian, and Baptist churches especially)—these are a few of the environmental influences that provided the Advent believers with a vocabulary to express their view of Adam's sin. Their determination to break with tradition contributed to an eclecticism as well.

The evidence shows that conditionalism was the direct vehicle through which the earliest treatments of Adam's sin entered the church's thought. But the development of that notion over the fifty-year span bears out that this dynamic of progressive understanding was at work. As the issues of present truth arose, there was an SDA willingness to make adjustments, even use new vehicles to convey their understandings of sin and particularly God's answer to it.

Historical Models

On the larger scale of Christian theological history, the view of Adventism on Adamic sin, compared to a variety of historical models, demonstrates a remarkably developed view of original sin—the product of centuries of debate. The following comparison shows this:

1. The Irenaean, or pre-Augustinian, Eastern Model. The recapitulation language and theme, the notion of an infantile Adam (the middle nature with respect to mortality and morality), man's inheritance of the weakness of will, sinful bias, and propensity through Adam's Fall—SDAs would agree with these elements of this model. The earliest pioneers would also agree that mortality was the major consequence of Adam's sin. However, with regard to depravation, moralism, and the tendency to allegorize, Adventism would judge this model either too shallow or unacceptable.

2. The Tertullian, or pre-Augustinian, Western Model. The early SDAs would agree that sin involves depravation of nature as well as deprivation of blessings, that there is still good left in man (the imago Dei is marred but not destroyed), that the race fell in Adam, that infants are neither guilty nor punishable for Adam's actual sin, that inherited propensities are not to be designated properly called sin, and that in some way the effects of Adam's sin are transmitted through natural generation. But they deny the concept of original righteousness, infant baptism, and the notion that the goodness left in man can move toward God.

3. The Pelagian Model. The affinity to Pelagius and the Pelagians is considerably less than the two earlier models, but on some points SDAs would agree with the concerns of this model. The principle that every person is responsible and guilty for his own sin, the notion that sin is primarily an act or an attitude rather than a nature, that sin resides in

the will, and that infant baptism has no meaning with regard to cleansing from inherited guilt are all points on which the early SDAs see some validity. But the denial of a corporate Fall, the concept of natural mortality, the absence of depravation as an essential element in understanding the power of sin, the atomistic nature of sin and acts of the will, the general principle of imitation, and the definition of divine grace as human will-power—these are major points of departure they would judge as unrealistic and shallow in view of Biblical and empirical evidence.

4. *The Augustinian Model.* The Adventist pioneers would reject Augustine's concepts that man was created originally righteous, that original sin is sexual concupiscence or lust, that guilt is transferable by the natural means of the procreative act, that free-will is essentially destroyed, that God is justified in damning infants for Adam's sin, and that predestination through a limited Atonement is God's method of rescuing man from total depravity. While Augustinianism, according to the model, is too extreme for them, the early SDAs would sympathize with Augustine's recognition that sin is a dominant force and that humanity is corporately bound together in such a way that nobody escapes without God's salvific intervention.

5. *The Tridentine, or Medieval, Roman Catholic Model.* Comparing early Adventism to this model is complicated by the element of sacramentalism which, though totally absent in Adventism, is a central element in Catholicism. The philosophical framework of the medieval theologians is hard to align with the American, popular characteristics of the pioneers. Comparisons made here must be understood in view of these philosophical disparities. The early SDAs would agree that in Adam all became sinful and subject to death and that without the salvific work of Christ there is no hope of salvation (though they would obviously differ on the form the

application of this work takes), that inclination to sin is not properly called sin, and that all men are inclined to sin even after baptism. But again, such notions as original righteousness, infant baptism, ecclesiastical sacerdotalism, and Tridentine rejection of total depravity are denied.

Evaluation

It is a reasonable conclusion that these historical models, while serving to give evidence of a long struggle of theological debate and development, did not exert direct influence on the SDA pioneers. Storrs, for instance, did not gain his understanding of the conditionalism by reading Theophilus, nor did Ellen White discover her language of recapitulation by studying Irenaeus. These were parts of a rich Christian heritage filtered through centuries of theological refinement, finally arriving in their present form. It is realistic to view Adventism in the context of its day, and to realize that it was very much a child of its times.

Original Sin: Legitimate Terminology

The tradition in which Adventism finds itself in the nineteenth century is Protestant, Arminian, conditionalist. Phenomenally it is largely anti-Catholic, and theologically, anti-Calvinist. This is not to suggest that SDAs were uncritical in their thinking or incapable of doing good Biblical exegesis. While they lacked formal training in some seminary skills, they demonstrated some remarkable skills of their own. And they put their stamp of uniqueness on the traditions they inherited as they engaged in the theological task (such as in the case of Storrs who tells of reading Grew's pamphlet and then studying the subject thoroughly before accepting it).

In this practice there is a lesson for modern Adventism. Theology has a need to be current and alive. However well Irenaeus' theology may

have fit his times, the issues in the nineteenth century were different. Augustine and Pelagius could argue points of unique importance to them, but times change. Simply to follow any ancient model completely would not have been helpful for the unique debates and concerns of the early SDAs. And in this respect Adventism was both modern and progressive in its approach. Issues that arise in the church must be dealt with as they emerge and often with the terminology of their inception. Such terminology cannot always be dictated by the past. While tradition is important in the Protestant mentality, it has never carried the weight of authority that Catholicism puts upon it. It has never been the norming norm. Historical models can be helpful in showing where the development of a certain theological component or thought may lead, but they are irrelevant if they do not speak to the issues of importance to the community of faith.

SDAs were in a line of Christian tradition in their position on original sin. To deny that SDAs taught "original sin" simply because the pioneers did not use the term to describe their particular belief in man's depravity is a generalization that is not supported by the historical data. Their version of original sin was not unique with them. The claim that it was not Augustinian is true, if by that designation one means it did not indulge in the extra-Biblical eccentricities of Augustine. But if one means it was Pelagian, then the charge is inaccurate by the historical standards.

Perhaps one should suggest that if "original sin" is a helpful term, it should not be shunned on the basis of alleged associations with heterodoxy. While SDAs have encouraged the use of Biblical terminology, even they have occasionally departed from that standard (viz., "the trinity," "the investigative judgment"). If one believes that "original sin" is not a helpful term because of its Augustinian connotations, then another term could be

substituted or the specific use of the term be more precisely defined.

Again Hick's distinction is valuable here:

It is helpful to distinguish between two **separable** elements . . . namely, the assertion of an inherited sinfulness or tendency to sin, and the assertion of a universal guilt in respect to Adam's crime, falling upon us on account of a physical or mystical presence of the whole race in its first forefather. . . . The former idea is common to all Christian traditions—whether in the form of a psychologically or of a socially transmitted moral distortion—whilst the latter idea is peculiar to Augustinian and Calvinist theology.¹

By this commonly accepted definition (the former **separable** element) early Adventism taught a doctrine of original sin that can be judged such by historical theological categories.

A Final Statement

It should be of little surprise to anyone acquainted with the history of theological development that in their soteriologically related discussions of righteousness by faith, perfection, and the nature of Christ modern SDAs have come to the debate over the doctrine of original sin.

If this research brings historical perspective that aids in equipping such discussions, it has made a positive contribution. But there is always the chance that theological debate can move beyond the sphere of its own contribution and erode rather than build love and unity. Further study on original sin for the purpose of strengthening one's own theological biases seems to be of little benefit to the church. Scripture counsels that one of the hazards of the theological task is that in one's zeal for theological soundness one can become unloving (Rev 2:1-5). It therefore behooves the theologian to use restraint and judgment as he matures in his own thinking on this subject. Christian theology must attempt to fulfill the Master's wish: "that they may be one" (John 17:11).

¹Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 201. Bold emphasis supplied.

APPENDIX

EARLY USES OF THE DESIGNATION "ORIGINAL SIN"

1. "Inasmuch as all die for original sin, none can die for personal sin." J. M. Stephenson, "The Atonement," RH 6:2 (August 22, 1854):10.
2. "While the penalty for personal sin is only one death, yet in reference to its relation to the penalty for original sin, it will be a second death." *Ibid.*
3. "Having investigated the nature of the penalty of God's law for original sin and having shown that it reduces the whole man to the dust of the earth, . . ." *Ibid.*, 6:7 (September 26, 1854):49.
4. "The penalty of God's law for original sin, is strictly enforced upon the condemned, and the guilty." *Ibid.*, 6:12 (October 31, 1854):89.
5. "Inasmuch as all die for original sin, or on account of the sin of Adam, . . ." Uriah Smith, "What is the Penalty of the Law?" RH 9:23 (April 9, 1857):180.
6. "'If Christ be in you, the body is dead (mortal, verse 11), because of sin (original sin made it mortal); but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." M. E. S. "Consecration. No. 7—Sanctification," RH 14:24 (November 3, 1859):189.
7. "They [the wicked] are subject to the original penalty, death, though it is to take place in a different manner than the death consequent upon original sin." G. P. Wilson, "The Destiny of the Ungodly," RH 16:8 (July 10, 1860):61.
8. "In the gospel is found no atonement for original sin." Albert Stone, "Thou Shalt Surely Die," RH 22:24 (November 10, 1863):190.
9. "The atonement for original sin, requires not the death of a substitute but the death of every individual of the race." *Ibid.*
10. "There is no atonement for original sin." *Ibid.*
11. "Original sin, as it is termed, or the sin of the first pair, which is the sole cause of death, finds no atonement in the blood of Christ." Albert Stone, "The Wages of Sin," RH 31:4 (January 7, 1868):49.
12. "If atonement for original sin had been included in God's plan of redeeming the world by his Son, then man would not have died." *Ibid.*

13. "Do not forget that no atonement is made for original sin by the death of Christ." Ibid.

14. "Man cannot be saved by any plan which does not include in itself an atonement for original sin." Ibid.

15. "The first death comes upon all alike, the righteous and wicked, as the result of the original Adamic sin, not as the penalty for personal transgressions since that time." Uriah Smith, "The Wrath of God," RH 32:22 (November 24, 1868):252.

16. "There is no provision in the gospel for the forgiveness of original sin." Albert Stone, "Not Pardoned," RH 49:8 (February 27, 1877):64.

17. "Baptism is not for 'original sin.' The sin of Adam brings no condemnation to his children, and baptism does not stand related to it. . . . We all inherit mortality from him, but not condemnation." J. H. Waggoner, "Thoughts on Baptism," RH 51:14 (April 4, 1878):105-106.

18. "Christ's death had no reference whatever to Adam's original sin, in the way of paying the penalty therefore, or saving men from its effects." Uriah Smith, "The Penalty of Adam's Sin," RH 65:27 (July 3, 1888):424-425.

19. "Christ appeared 'to abolish death,' and the death which He abolished was the death that came into the world by the original sin (Rom. 5:12), and through the temptation of the original murderer." "Life in Christ and the Saints' Inheritance," International Sabbath School Quarterly, Second Quarter (April 25, 1896):12.

20. "The sentence of death spoken of in Rom. 6:23 and Eze. 18:4 can have no reference to the original sin, for Christ has freed all from the death, whether righteous or wicked." "Life in Christ and the Saints' Inheritance." International Sabbath School Quarterly, Second Quarter (May 2, 1896):14.

21. "Every sin committed awakens the echoes of the original sin." Ellen G. White, "The Warfare Between Good and Evil," RH 78:16 (April 16, 1901):241.

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