

**The Atonement—
From Eden to Calvary**

My Early Paradigm

1. The Edenic Edict “dying thou shalt die” is taken literally. It means “a process,” a “natural death,” “mortality.”
2. The term "day" in the Edenic warning “in the day you eat” means either a 1000-year "day" or that mortality would **begin** the day of transgression.
3. Adam and Eve sinned, incurring their **natural** death, and acquiring a proneness to sin. This is sometimes expressed as “they were sentenced according to the law they transgressed.”
4. Adam received exactly what had been threatened—mortality.
5. Mankind inherits a natural death, that is, mortality and a proneness to sin.
6. Each man is thought to be a "new Adam" to obey or disobey.
7. If disobedient, one may have his sins forgiven by baptism.
8. Jesus, being sinless, had no personal need for either baptism or an offering:
 - a. He was baptized to show the way for others. “To fulfill all righteousness.”

- b. He had no personal reason to die, except to show what was due to actual sinners.
 - c. A natural death would have sufficed for his own salvation. He would have been “saved” even if he had died a natural death. (Except refusal would have been disobedience.)
9. Jesus' blood-shedding death was merely a final act of obedience.
10. The KIND of death required of Jesus was therefore on behalf of others.

Major Obstacles to Understanding the Atonement

- 1. Acceptance of a common Hebrew figure of speech (Idiom).**
- 2. Understanding why it's meaning didn't happen.**
- 3. How we relate to the first two.**

It is abundantly evident that death is inherited, and not a result of personal individual transgression. For this reason alone, readers of this passage, Romans 5:12, will balk at the misleading text of the King James Version where at the end of the verse it adds, "for (or because) all have sinned." This added phrase (as translated) is simply not true because all who die have not sinned. Infants die. The provided marginal rendering "in whom all have sinned" suddenly becomes reasonable. "Death passed upon all men," says the apostle, because of the "one man," "in whom all have sinned." The validity of this understanding is further evident when viewed in light of Paul's additional comment (v.14) that death reigns "even over them that had not sinned" (in an individual sense) which obviously includes blameless infants.

“Atonement”

Kaphar (Hebrew) = to Cover, Covering

**The Events in Eden—
Why Sacrifice?
(Why Bloodshed?)**

It appears we can find no reason for Christ to have died the kind of death he did, that is, a sacrificial blood-shedding inflicted death, without going back in time to Eden. It is a fact that the offeror of blood-shedding sacrifices under the law was required to "put his hands upon the head" of the animal (Lev 1:4), apparently to identify himself with the animal and effectively and consciously admit his own liability to the kind of death the sacrificial victim endured as his representative. ("This animal represents me"). And certainly one could stop in Hebron and ask Abraham why the divided parts of sacrificial animals were scattered and why the covenant parties, he and God (the burning lamp), apparently passed between those pieces (Gen 15, Jer 34:18, see Adam Clark). But still, the idea of blood shedding and its association with both sin and also covenant making, that is, "covenant cutting" (again, implying blood, Heb. Berith, see Strong's) is entirely groundless until we go to Eden. If we ignore the exercise of looking to Eden, the KIND of death Christ died has absolutely no basis, and becomes merely coincidental or arbitrary.

Genesis

- (2:8) God planted a garden in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.
- (2:10) And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest **freely eat**:
- (2:17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for **in the day** that thou eatest thereof **thou shalt surely die**.
- (2:18) And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
- And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;
- (2:22) And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.
- (2:23) And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called **Woman**, because she was taken out of Man.
- (3:2) And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:
- (3:3) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, **lest ye die**.
- (3:4) And the serpent said unto the woman, **Ye shall not surely die**:
- (3:5) For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

- (3:6) She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.
- (3:7) And **the eyes of them both were opened**, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves **aprons**.
- (3:8) And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.
- (3:9) And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?
- (3:10) And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.
- (3:11) Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?
- (3:12) And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and **I did eat**.
- (3:13) And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and **I did eat**.
- (3:19) [to the man] for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.
- (3:20) And Adam called his wife's name **Eve**; because she was the mother of all living.
- (3:21) Unto Adam also and to his wife **did the LORD God make coats of skins**, and **clothed** them.

**The Events in Eden—
Why Sacrifice?
(Why Bloodshed?)**

The Genesis Record, Henry M. Morris, p.94: **“Literally, the warning (“thou shalt surely die”) could be read: ‘Dying, thou shalt die!’ The moment Adam disobeyed God, the principle of decay and death would begin to operate in his body; and, finally this would overcome the built-in metabolic processes and he would go back to the dust from which his body was formed.”**

Adam Clark’s Commentary, p20: **“Literally, ‘a death thou shalt die’; or, ‘dying thou shalt die.’ Thou shalt not only die spiritually, by losing the life of God, but from that moment thou shalt become mortal, and shalt continue in a dying state till thou die. This we find literally accomplished...”**

The Tanach, The Stone Edition, p6: Since Adam lived to the age of nine hundred and thirty, it is clear that he was not to die as soon as he ate the fruit. Rather, he would become *subject* to death.”

Elpis Israel, John Thomas p.69. In this language (Hebrew) the phrase is muth temuth, which literally rendered is DYING THOU SHALT DIE. The sentence, then, as a whole reads thus—“*In the day of thy eating from it dying thou shalt die.*” From this reading it is evident, that Adam was to be subjected to a process, but not an endless process; but to one which should commence with the transgression and end with his extinction. The process is expressed by, *muth dying*; and the last stage of the process by *temuth, thou SHALT DIE. ...The end of our being is the end of that process by which we are resolved into dust—we cease to be.*

“Dying thou shalt die is a description of a process.” *The Resurrection to Condemnation*, p.10.
R. Roberts.

“The penalty for eating of the proscribed fruit, according to the record, was a gradual decay ending in death.” *The Atonement*, Logos Publications, p.329.

- (2:17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for **in the day** that thou eatest thereof **thou shalt surely die**.
- (3:21) Unto Adam also and to his wife **did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed** them.

“The expression “dying thou shalt die: is a Hebraism; the infinitive form of the verb is followed by the indicative to carry emphasis... “Dying thou shalt die” is, as I have said, emphatic;..” *The Christadelphian, 1879*

What is a “Hebraism”?

A Hebrasim is an expression or idiom that makes good sense in Hebrew, but not in the language into which the Hebrew was translated. (Every language has these kinds of idioms. Greek has Graecisms, Latin has Latinisms, English has Anglicisms, and so on.) *Ben C. Smith, Text Excavation 2008*

Footnote to p. 69 in *Elpis Israel*

“The Hebrew idiom is correctly represented by the text of the Authorized Version. Compare Gen. 2:16 (mg.), ‘Eating thou shalt eat’; and Dt. 13:15, lit., ‘smiting thou shalt smite’.”

Bro. Whittaker comments:

In *Elpis Israel*, p 69 4th ed., Dr. Thomas translates the Hebrew words literally: "dying thou shalt die" (see AV mg.), and reads this as meaning that a gradual process of dying began from the moment of disobedience. However, this misses the force of the Hebrew idiom, for this form of expression, very common in Old Testament Hebrew, is simply an emphatic way of saying, as AV: "thou shalt surely die." (*Genesis 1-2-3-4*, H.A. Whittaker, p.68).

The Paraclete Forum Archive, under the heading “Emphasis in Biblical Hebrew,” says:

“In Gen 2:17 the word ‘die’ is repeated in the form of ‘dying’ and is translated as ‘surely die.’ This is a standard Hebrew form used for emphasis and does not mean “a state of dying” as some seem to suggest.”

Id-i-om: An accepted phrase or expression having a meaning different from the literal.

Webster’s New World Dictionary

MUTH TE MUTH

DYING.....thou shalt.....DIE

(And think it means)

MORTALITY....will end in....DEATH

(a process)

God said to Abraham, “In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed...” Gen 22:17

Blessing I will bless, etc.

The Hebrew idiom is obscured in this familiar verse by its literal translation. That the idiom is intended for emphasis is verified by its quotation in the letter to the Hebrews (6:13-14) where the word “surely” appears, and the author comments that the certainty of its fulfillment is the fact that the Lord “swore by himself,” and “confirmed it by an oath.” It is not the process of blessing that is intended, nor the process of multiplying, but rather the certainty of each. The use of this emphatic idiom may well account for why the author later says (v.19) that our hope is an “anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.”

“Though the vision tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry”
(Habakkuk 2:3).

Coming it will come

The Hebrew idiom “*coming it will come*” simply means emphatically—“it will come,” or “most certainly will come,” or “make no mistake about it, it is going to happen.” Thus the translators incorporated the words “surely come” to correctly express the emphasis and certainty expressed by the idiom.

“The absence of a number at the end of a passage shows that the word in question is not there the rendering of any particular term in the original... , being the representative merely of some form or peculiar idiom of a Hebrew or Greek term.”

Strong's Concordance, Directions and Explanations

“Additional Words”

SURELY—

In Hebrew often expressed by repeating a verb in an infinitive form (adverbial infinitive). So with come (Hab 2. 3), deliver (2 Ki. 18. 30), die (Gen 2. 17, Judg. 13. 22), be put to death (Exod. 19. 12, Judg. 21. 5), etc. The word surely occurs with die or be put to death about fifty times in the Old Testament and is then always a translation of an emphasizing infinitive.

Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible

Examples of Idiomatic Expression

“Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.” Gen 2:16

Eating thou shalt eat

This was spoken prior to Adam's sin. The verb is doubled to emphasize free access to and the abundance of food, not a slow process of eating. Compare with 1 Samuel 14:30 where the exact same construction occurs. The people fainted because they had not “eaten freely.”

“The man (Joseph) did **solemnly protest** unto us (Judah and his brothers), saying, ‘Ye shall not see my face, except your brother (Benjamin) be with you.’” Gen 43:3

Protesting he protested

By use of this idiom, Joseph, as the ruler of Egypt was very emphatic that Benjamin **MUST** be with the sons of Jacob the next trip to Egypt for food. Joseph did not begin a process of protesting.

“And they (the brothers) said (to Jacob), The man **asked us straitly** of our state, and our kindred, saying, ‘Is your father yet alive? Have ye another brother?’”

Gen 43:7

Asking he asked

Jacob was distressed that his sons had told the Egyptian ruler (Joseph) that they had a brother at home.

But Joseph was not passively looking for clues about his father,

Jacob. He outright and emphatically asked about him and his own brother, Benjamin. There was no long inquisitive process.

They were direct questions.

“And we told him (Joseph) according to the tenor of these words: **could we certainly know** that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’” Gen 43:7

Knowing could we know?

There is no hint of a process of the brothers accumulating knowledge. The brothers were surprised by the demand which the ruler had made.

Emphatically, perhaps with arms stretched upward and shaking their heads, they inquired of their father, “How could we have known?”.

Grammar

Noun=a word that denotes

- a person
- a place
- or a thing

Verb=a word that expresses action.

Cognate verb= a verb's use in its regular, normal fashion, that is, "with person"

I know John

I like Spain

I eat pie

Infinitive= an unconjugated verb that can be used as a noun, in other words, a verbal noun.

For example: the verb "eat" can be used as a noun in its infinitive form, "TO EAT".

I like TO EAT....

I like TO WALK...

I like TO COME...

The Gerund form adds “ing” also a Noun

I like EAT-ING

I like WALK-ING

I like COM-ING

Cognitive Verb

Infinitive form

I like

to eat

I like

eating (noun)

Muth te-Muth

The construction of Genesis 2:17.

1. The word “Muth,” a verb, means “die.”
2. Notice the verb is doubled.
3. This polyptoton (i.e. many inflections) construction is an idiom, a figure of speech.
4. The first “muth” is a Hebraism called the “infinitive absolute.”
5. The infinitive form of “Muth” is “to die”
6. Its gerund form is “dying.”
7. “Te” means “you.”
8. The cognate verb is te-muth, “you die”

Infinitive (abs.)

Muth

To die

Dying

Regular (cognate) verb

te-muth

you die

thou shalt die

“The Infinitve Absolute”

“The infinitive absolute is a verbal noun that can serve as a noun, verb, or adverb. It primarily takes the place of a noun. As such it normally serves to intensify meanings, functioning as either a complement of affirmation, often translated ‘surely’ and ‘indeed’ or a complement of improbability and condition, often translated ‘at all,’ ‘freely,’ ‘indeed’.”

The Complete Word Study Old Testament, Warren Baker, Grammatical Notations, p. 2277.

The infinitive absolute often stands immediately before its cognate verb, thus serving to strengthen, reinforce, and intensify the verbal idea.

Biblical Hebrew, An Introductory Grammar,
Page H. Kelly, p. 185

The infinitive absolute sometimes stands after its cognate verb, in which case it serves to emphasize the duration or CONTINUATION of the verbal idea.

Biblical Hebrew, An Introductory Grammar,

Page H. Kelly, p. 184

Had a Process Been Intended

Regular (cognate) verb

Infinitive (abs.)

Te-muth

muth

You die

to die

Thou shalt die

dying

“Weep sore” for him that goeth away

Jer 22:10

Regular (cognate) verb

bakah
(You) weep
Weep

Infinitive (abs.)

bakah
to weep
weeping

Hannah’s Prayer (emphatic)

1Sam 1:10

Infinitive (abs.)

Bakah
To weep
Weeping

Regular (cognate) verb

ti-bakah
she weeps
she wept

Reversed Verb and Noun

Isaiah 6:9 Hear ye(verb) hearing(noun)
Deut 28:1 Listening(noun) listen (verb)
Hearing(noun) hear (verb)

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graph TD; A[Isaiah 6:9 Hear ye(verb)] --> B[Deut 28:1 listen (verb)]; A --> C[Deut 28:1 Hearing(noun)]; D[Deut 28:1 Listening(noun)] --> B; D --> C;
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Muth—Causative

"Muth; to die, to kill, slay, bring to death, have one executed."

The Complete Word Study Old Testament Lexicon, Warren Baker, page 2330

Strong's 4191: **muwth**, *mooth*; a prim. root; to *die* (lit. or fig.); causat. To *kill*:

Causative action can be either in an active voice such as "I will kill," or a passive voice "shall be killed." Both are "imperfect" in the sense that they are future, that is, they have not yet been accomplished.

Examples

Mount Sinai

*And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: (Exo 19:12). We need not misunderstand the intent of the edict here, for it is given in the next verse to be **execution**. *He shall surely be stoned, or shot through*; whether it be beast or man it shall not live:*

Incest and Homosexuality

And the man that lieth with his father's wife... or daughter in law... or with mankind..., both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Lev 20:11-13).

Fortune tellers

A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them (Lev 20:27).

Non Attendance

When the children of Israel were aghast at the dismembered concubine whose pieces were sent throughout the land, they called a conference of the tribes and said, *Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, **He shall surely be put to death.** And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day (Judg 21:5, 6). The text adds "go and smite", and "utterly destroy." It is of interest here to note the execution (cutting off) did not occur the same day, but certainly the incurring of liability for such action did.*

Jeremiah

*Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, **Thou shalt surely die** (Jer 26:8). Verse 11 adds, "This man is worthy to die" which seems to indicate liability, a decree which after some consideration was changed to "not worthy to die" v.16.*

Solomon and Shimei

*For it shall be, that on the day thou (Shimei) goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain (knowing you shall know) that **thou shalt surely die** (dying thou shalt die) thy **blood** shall be upon thine own head (1 Ki 2:37). Note the connection between the edict and the method of death. Note also when the liability was incurred and intended to be **inflicted**.*

Repentance

*Again, when I say unto the wicked, **Thou shalt surely die**; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if he walk in the statutes of life, ...**he shall surely live**, and not die (Ezk 33:14). These words are a repeat of verse 8 where the wicked's "*blood is required*" for his wickedness. If, however, "*in the day*" (v.12) he turns from his sin, "**living he shall live**" and not muth (die). This is very important to note. Notice that "in the day" (of repentance) liability shifts the other way. Instead of from life to death, it is from death to life. This is an exact pattern of the events in Eden.*

Summary

To surmise that Adam's transgression incurred a "natural" process of mortality is to suggest that the coats of skins from which the Lord fashioned coverings were taken from carcasses of animals expired of old age.

A Suggested Six-point Solution
as to
Why was Adam not executed?

- a) Adam incurred the liability of being cut-off, but...
- b) Confessed his sin
- c) Repented
- d) Expressed faith in promises given
- e) “Died” in a ceremonial sense, and...
- f) His execution (liability to annihilation) was thereby commuted by God through mercy.
He **“lived.”**

I am the LORD, I change not; Mal 3:6

With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. James 1:17

***He is not a man that he should repent.
I Sam 15:29***

***God is not a man, that he should lie.
Num 23:19***

...God, that cannot lie. Titus 1:2

God Repents!

I will destroy man... for it repenteth me that I have made them (Gen 6:7).

The LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people (Ex 32:14).

It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king (I Sam 15:11).

Turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him (Joel 2:13).

Thou (Judah) art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee... I (the LORD) am weary with (my) repenting (Jer 15:6).

God Responds

If ye (Israel) walk in my statutes, I will bless... (Lev 26)

If you (Israel) will not hearken unto me, I will punish... (Lev 26)

Only acknowledge (thy sin, Judah) and I will... give pastors etc. (Jer 3:13)

If ye (Judah) diligently hearken... (Jer 17:24) (note the construction)

If ye (Israel) forsake, then... (Josh 24:20)

If we (as part of Israel) confess, our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins... (1 Jn 1:9)

Who Repents and Why?

(Jer 18:7)

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, ...to destroy it; If that nation, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

And the reverse is also true:

And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, ...to build or to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them (Jer 18:9).

Leviticus 26:40-44

If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

(1 Kg 8:33, Hos 5:15, and Jer 3:13-17 deal with this national principle specifically)

Jonah 3:4

Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, ...and the king proclaimed... let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

*v.10 God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.
(Jonah 3:10)*

Zechariah 1:3

"Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you."

Psalm 32:2

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

It would seem the transgressor's "spirit" is of the utmost import for the blessing of Yahweh to be bestowed. The attitude of the transgressor apparently plays a vital part in how the LORD responds. Examples:

Isaiah 66:2

To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word

Psalms 86:5

For thou, LORD, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee

James 4:6 citing Prov 3:34

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Unconditional Statements **Altered**

Abraham Inquired of Sodom (Gen 18)

David Numbered the People(2Sam 24:16)

When the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand

Ahab's Humility(1Kg 21:29)

Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

Mandated Circumcision(Gen 17:14)

...the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people.

Hezekiah's Disease (2Kg 20:1)

Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Hezekiah wept, and Isaiah returned to him and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee.

The Golden Calf Incident (Ex 32:14)

Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation... And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

The Child of David's Adultery (2 Sam 12:14)

...the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die (muth te muth). And the LORD struck the child. David therefore besought God for the child...

(v.22) While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

Justice and Mercy

By Justice we understand the rendering to everyone his due. Mercy suggests a willingness to save from strict justice.

In the beginning, when God gave a law to man, it foreshadowed nothing but strict justice. There was reason in this. If, in the terms of the law of Eden, there had been any hint of the possible exercise of mercy, then it would have put a premium upon the breaking of that law, and the law itself, being by so much weakened, the sin of Adam would have been less heinous than it was. Indeed, if the law had not been so stringent and unequivocal, where would there have been scope for the exercise of Divine Mercy? Hath it not the greater glory in that the Edenic law breathed never a thought of it?

In regard to the laws of men, what acts as a deterrent to the breaking of them? Is it not the cold prospect of their penalties being strictly carried out? Divine mercy in Eden "rejoiced against judgment" (James 2:13) in providing for a "seed" to restore that which He took not away; and Divine Mercy has also brought us, through that "seed," into the way of Salvation.

Bro. John Owler, 1902, London, England
Later the editor of the *Advocate and Fellow Laborer*

Romans 11:32

For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all

Exodus 34:5

And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with Moses there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before Moses, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...

Psalms 103:8-10

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.... He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

James 2:13

Mercy rejoices against judgment.

A Suggested Six-point Solution
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Why Adam was not executed

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thereby commuted by God through mercy.
He “lived.”

CONFESSION: THE FIRST STEP TO RECONCILIATION

- ◆ *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh (his sins) shall have mercy, Prov 28:13*
- ◆ *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Is 55:7*
- ◆ *He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Ps 103:10*
- ◆ *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rm 10:10*
- ◆ *Only acknowledge thine iniquity..., Jer 3:13*
- ◆ *Have mercy upon me, for I acknowledge my transgressions, Ps 51:1-3*
- ◆ *A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ps 51:17*
- ◆ *If we confess our sins, (then) he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1Jn 1:9.*

“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve (Gk. Zoe, see LXX); because she was (to become) the mother of all living.” Gen 3:20

“That though they had merited immediate death, yet they should be respited, and the accomplishment of the sentence be long delayed; they should be spared to propagate a numerous progeny on the earth.”

Adam Clark’s Commentary, p.23

We may be reminded of Jesus’ words from Jn 5:24 saying believers are “passed from death unto life.” Or as some have paraphrased it, “passed from the sentence of death to the sentence of life.” Out of Adam into Christ!

Summary

I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy. Rm 9:15

Examples of Positive Imputation

A. Imputed Blessings by Proximity

Sodom. The LORD specifically stated He would spare Sodom had there been ten or more "righteous" living there (Gen 18:29). The extended life of the wicked would then have been a blessing as a **direct result** of the presence of the few "righteous."

Potiphar. The Egyptian ruler was blessed **because** of Joseph's presence. (Gen 39:5).

B. Imputed Blessings by Inheritance

Deliverance from Egypt was *"because God loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out... of Egypt"* (Dt 4:37, 9:5). The blessing of deliverance from Egypt was a direct result of their **father's** favor in God's sight. Abraham's (etc.) favor and blessing was thereby "imputed" to them.

Victory when entering the land of Canaan was *"not for thy righteousness", ... "for thou art a stiff-necked people",* but that *"he may perform the word which he sware unto thy fathers"* (Dt 9:5). The blessing **of the fathers** was thereby imputed to their posterity.

Continued existence and restoration. The nation of Israel deserved destruction, for they had become more wicked than their ungodly neighbors, and yet we read, *"I do not this (blessing of restoration) for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned"* (Ez 36:22). Israel clearly benefited by their bloodline, they were blessed because of the **status of their fathers**.

Mephibosheth, Jonathan's lame son was fed and housed by King David because Jonathan's favored position in David's eyes was imputed to him (2 Sam 9:7).

Rehoboam, because of his grandfather David's status in the eyes of the LORD, was granted rulership over one tribe. His father Solomon's evil doings, however, were also deferred unto him. So, Solomon inherited a blessing **from his father** David, but by his own misdeeds brought a **curse upon his son** Rehoboam, who inherited not only the blessing from his grandfather David, but also the curse from his father, Solomon. (I Kg 11:12-34).

Jehoram... did evil in the sight of the LORD. Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake (2Kg 8:19). In spite of Jehoram's evil, Judah was blessed **because of David**—an inherited blessing, of course.

Israel was favored because of Jacob's faith, and inherited their father's name and a consequent blessing. *For Jacob my servant's sake, ...I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee (Israel), though **thou hast not known me*** (Is 45:4). The blessing of Jacob thus fell upon his descendants.

What advantage hath the Jew? Much in every way. This also is an inherited blessing, an advantage and preferential **status** that was not available to other nationalities (Rm 3:1).

Examples of Negative Imputation

Ham & Canaan—Ham's son, Canaan, was cursed for **his father's actions** (Gen 9:25).

Shechem—Jacob's sons viewed Shechem's rape of their sister Dinah as a **corporate "sin,"** and therefore slew all the males of Shechem's city (Gen 34).

Korah and Company—Moses asked the LORD, "*Shall one man (Korah) sin and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?*" (Nm 16:22). Korah, Dathan, and Abiram who questioned Moses' authority "*stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and (notice) their little children*" perished together because of the sin of "*one man*".

Gehazi's Leprosy—Elisha's servant, Gehazi, took payment for Elisha's healing Naaman the Syrian of his leprosy. As punishment Elisha said, *The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and **unto thy seed** for ever.* His seed was certainly not guilty, but nonetheless suffered. Certainly this could be termed "inherited condemnation

Achan's Sin—When Achan took the accursed thing in the battle of Jericho, not only did his family suffer, who may have been aware of his sin, but God's "*wrath fell upon **all the congregation of Israel***" and the Scripture specifically states, "**Israel** hath sinned," "**they** (Israel) have

transgressed", "**they** (Israel) have taken," etc. People other than the actual individual offender, although not personally guilty, **were held liable** and suffered as a direct result of Achan's sin. Although not technically "condemnation" by inheritance, it certainly is condemnation by proximity.

Saul's Seven Sons—Sometime after Saul's death, there was a famine in the land. David inquired of the LORD for the cause. *"It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites,"* was the answer. To rectify the situation, the Gibeonites requested that seven of Saul's sons be delivered to the Gibeonites to be *"hanged"*. David complied *"and after that God was entreated for the land"* (2 Sam 21). These seven "sons" (probably grandsons) of Saul were therefore killed for something their father had done and it apparently pleased the LORD. "Inherited condemnation" seems to be the only explanation.

Ahaziah's Death—Because of Ahab's wickedness, cessation of his family name and dynasty was declared. By repentance, however, the end was deferred to his son Ahaziah (1 Kg 21:21, 27). King Ahaziah fell through a lattice and died, and having no heir, the throne fell to another family (2 Kg 1:17). Ahaziah was **not personally guilty** of his father's wickedness, but certainly died as a direct result thereof. He **inherited the liability** (not guilt) of his father's sin, and the "inherited condemnation" to death claimed his life.

Circumcision—Liability for a parent's non-performance of circumcision fell upon innocent children. The **child** is said to have "*broken my covenant*", and was thereby **liable to have been slain** (Gen 17:14), as in the case of Moses' son Gershom (Ex 4:24). The parent sins, the child suffers. Note: During the forty years in the wilderness, infants had not been circumcised (Jsh 5:5-7), yet they lived. It is evident they had inherited the liability of being "cut-off", but it didn't happen. In this it is important to understand the relationship between "liability", and God's forbearance.

Passover—The keeping of Passover seems to have been the responsibility of the head of household (Ex 12:3), and failure to do so brought condemnation upon the firstborn, and later anyone failing to participate (Nm 9:13). Many a Hebrew family incurred **the liability of death on account of their elders** as we read "(Israel and Judah) *had not* (kept the Passover) *of a long time in such sort as it was written*" (2 Ch 30:5).

The Amalekites—The Amalekites incurred, and later generations inherited, the liability of being cut-off because **their fathers** attacked Israel during the Exodus. "*When the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven;* (Dt 25:19). It was "remembered" by the LORD and meted out by Saul **five hundred years later** (I Sam 15:2); a clear example of both "inherited liability" and "inherited condemnation."

David's Infant Son—King David's infant son by Bathsheba died as a direct result of David's sin. As those who have experienced such a tragic loss know, this is hard to accept, and our souls are tormented to find an answer. In this case, was the child's death inherited liability? Inherited condemnation? And we bring to mind Abraham's words, "*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*" (Gen18:25). Note: The apostle Paul clearly teaches that death came upon all men as a result of one man's sin. In this case, the victim has **absolutely no sin or guilt of its own**, yet in God's eyes the innocent child's death is "just". To direct our minds in the right direction, one might ask, What single event in the course of human history made the death of this infant "just"?

David's Census—David numbered the people, *and "the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel"* (2 Sam 24). "*I have sinned and done wickedly, but these sheep, what have they done?*" The LORD was entreated and the plague stayed, but seventy thousand men had died.

Innocent Victims—Children of incest, certain nationalities, and certain individuals of physical misfortune were banned from the congregation of the LORD **through no fault of their own**, even to the "*tenth generation*" and "*forever*"! (Dt 23:2, 3). Illegitimate children bear a similar stigma in our society today.

Christ Cursed by the Law—The mode of Messiah's death brought him under the curse of the Law, a curse which was imputed to him even though **there was no guilt on his part**. This is Paul's argument in Galatians 3:11, in which he states "*no man*" (including Messiah) is justified by the works of the Law, for he, like all others, also came under its curse. Why? That he might redeem those under the same curse (v.13). There is a possible parallel in Heb 2:14-15, in which it is stated Christ was made of the same identical flesh and blood as his brethren, that is, he too bore the Adamic curse as a "seed of the woman". Why? Apparently that he might accomplish two things: 1) destroy the diabolos, that is, that which has the power of death which by implication must have something to do with Eden because that is where death began, and 2) deliver them (his brethren the Jews) who were under bondage (to the Law). For this reason it was imperative that he be not only of the seed of the woman, but also the seed of Abraham. In these parallel cases, it is necessary that he be a representative of the group, that he might deliver them from the two curses, that is, Adamic death, and Mosaic bondage.

The Blind Man and Israel's Proverb—Messiah's disciples asked him, "*Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind*", indicating that this concept of "inherited condemnation" and "inherited 'sin'" was not foreign to those of Israel (Jn 9:2). The disciple's question is a reflection of the proverb, "*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*" (Ezk 18:2). Jeremiah says a time shall come when this shall no longer be said, clearly validating Israel's observation of negative imputation (Jer 31:29).

A.D. 70, Whose Fault?—Certainly the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was a result of Israel's failure to recognize its redeemer. "*O Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!*" And before Pilate, the people shouted, "*His blood be on us, and on our children*" (Mt 27:25). Notice the word "children". It was forty years later, when the children's "inherited liability" became reality. More on this can be seen in Leviticus 26, and Deuteronomy 28 where **because of the sins of their fathers**, the LORD would bring horrible events upon even the infant children, many of whom were in fact eaten by their own parents. Equally difficult for us to fathom is the concept of "*confessing the sins of our fathers*", and acknowledging that Israel as a nation has "*walked contrary to our God*", a clear prerequisite that He might implement the covenant made to our fathers (Lev 26:40). All this is part of the "corporate personality" of the Hebrew Scriptures, and a reminder of the "By one man" concept echoed by Paul (Rom 5:12).

Romans 5:18

Therefore as by the offence 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. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

***“Abraham believed (faithed)
God, and his faith was accounted
unto him for righteousness
(justification)”***

(Gen 15:6; Rm 4:3; Gal 3:6).

***“For if Abraham were justified
(made righteous) by works, he
hath whereof to glory; but not
before God.”*** (Romans 4:2)

***“by Him all that believe are
justified from all things”*** (Acts 13:39),

***“but ye are justified in the name
of the Lord Jesus”*** (1 Cor 6:11).

*“therefore being justified by
faith, we have peace with God”*

Romans 5:1

“being now justified by his blood”

Romans 5:9

Romans 1:16

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of
Christ: for it is the power of God unto
salvation to every one that believeth; to the
Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

*For therein is the righteousness of God
revealed from faith to faith: as it is
written, The just shall live by faith.*

The just shall live by faith (Hab 2:4)

Paraphrased=

*By faith, he who God designates as
“righteous” is reckoned as “living.”*

Summary Regarding the Three Obstacles:

Obstacle #1

RE: “Thou shalt surely die.”

To surmise that Adam’s transgression incurred a “natural” process of mortality is to suggest that the coats of skins from which the Lord fashioned coverings were obtained from animals expired of old age.

(Kaphar=Atonement = “Covering”) *Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Rm 5:11*

Obstacle #2

RE: God’s attributes. *I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy. Rm 9:15*

Obstacle #3

RE: The connection. *The Just shall live by faith= He who God designates as “righteous” is reckoned by faith as “living.” Rm 1:17*

The “By One Man” Scenario

- 1. (Obstacle #1) The Edenic Edict, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," is an Idiom.**
- 2. It means execution and by inference, bloodshed.**
- 3. Adam sinned deliberately, incurring the liability of execution.**
- 4. God provided hope for the erring couple. The promised seed of the woman would prevail over deception and sin.**
- 5. Adam personally experienced a four-point reconciliation process.**
 - a. Acknowledged and confessed his sin**
 - b. Repented**
 - c. Expressed faith in what God had said**
 - d. Bloodshed (coats of skins were provided)**
- 6. (Obstacle #2) Mercy was extended because of Adam's demeanor and his life was spared, and sentence commuted.**
- 7. (Obstacle #3) The principle of imputation is a widely demonstrated principle of Scripture, both positive and negative. Neither merit nor guilt is a factor.**

8. Adam's posterity was in his loins when he transgressed and by the principle of imputation inherits:

- **Liability of execution**
- **A proneness toward evil**
- **Physical mortality**
- **A stigma or status we call "the constitution of sin"**

9. The proneness to sin demonstrates itself in our selfishness and personal transgression.

10. Physical mortality is with men until "change of body."

11. Baptism is the present means by which one associates himself with the "slain lamb" receiving forgiveness of personal sins, and also a change from "the constitution of sin", to "the constitution of righteousness," a "covering" for our "sin-nature."

12. By faith we ceremonially "die" with the sacrificial victim, "the Lamb of God" and are accounted (deemed) "righteous," "justified unto life," and "living."

13. As Jesus was "brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant," so also are those "in Jesus" to be raised from the dead. "Christ the first fruits, afterward, those that are Christ's at his coming."

Habakuk 2:3-4

*Though the vision
tarry, wait for it;
because it will surely
come,
it will not tarry.*

*Behold, his soul
which is lifted up is
not upright in him:*

*but the just shall live
by his faith.*

Hebrews 10:37

*For yet a little
while, and
he that shall come
will come, and
will not tarry.*

*Now the just shall
live by faith:*

*but if any man
draw back, my
soul shall have no
pleasure in him.*

