

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

*Chosen by God* - R. C. Sproul

### Session 7 – Adam’s Fall & Mine

A brief recap & context for today’s session: Last week, Paul discussed that we are freed not to sin only after we come to Christ; we needed to be dragged to him. Why do we need to be freed? It's because of the Fall. So let's take a look at the Fall. What is it? Is it merely metaphorical? I hope to also discuss just how bad this fall really is, but we may have to introduce that next week.

We keep on talking about being spiritually dead before coming to Christ, not merely on life support. Why? As we briefly reviewed before - original sin.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. (Psalms 51:5 ESV)

### **The Fall**

Just as a reminder - Original sin is the state in which sin pervades people due to the first sin of people through Adam and Eve; after the Fall we are morally incapable of living without sin. Why was it Adam who sinned, didn't Eve bite first and give the fruit to Adam? 1) He did eat the fruit that God forbade to be eaten and 2) he was given responsibility for Eden and for the earth. It was also a failure of leadership.

Let's jump back into the account in Genesis 3 - The Fall:

[1] Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” [2] And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, [3] but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” [4] But the serpent said to

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

the woman, “You will not surely die. [5] For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” [6] So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. [7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Genesis 3:1–7 ESV)

So we have the first sin. The next sin comes in the form of the blame game and we see the repercussions of sin:

[11] He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” [12] The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” [13] Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

[14] The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,  
    cursed are you above all livestock  
    and above all beasts of the field;  
on your belly you shall go,  
    and dust you shall eat  
    all the days of your life.

[15] I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
    and between your offspring and her offspring;  
he shall bruise your head,  
    and you shall bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:11–15 ESV)

Now that we are reminded of the account, let's dive in a bit more to if this account is even real and if it was, how are we tied up into Adam's sin.

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

There are 3 views R.C. Sproul reviews in his book: Mythological, Historical-Realism, and Historical-Federated.

The **mythological** view is, unsurprisingly, that the first few chapters of Genesis are actually mythology. According to this view, there's no physical Adam or physical Eve. There are symbolic objects such as the serpent and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. These chapters are a moral tale about the universal problem of sin. No one is perfect. It is a universal condition of humans. It is literal poetry not a history textbook.

As Sproul puts it:

The moral truth communicated by the myth is that people fall into sin. Sin is a universal problem. Everyone commits sin; no one is perfect. The myth points to a higher reality: Everyone is his own Adam. Every person has his own private fall. Sin is a universal human condition precisely because every person succumbs to his own private temptation. The attractive elements of this theory are important. In the first place, this view absolves God entirely of any responsibility for holding future generations of people responsible for what one couple did. Here, no one can blame their parents or their Creator for their own sin. In this scheme, my fallenness is a direct result of my own fall, not of someone else's. A second advantage of this view is that it escapes all need to defend the historical character of the beginning chapters of the Bible. This view suffers no anxiety from certain theories of evolution or from scientific disputes about the nature of creation. The factual truth of a myth never needs to be defended.

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (p. 60). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

Before reviewing the core content of this claim, I want to discuss the literary basis - that this reads like poetry not history. Theologians who hold the historical view recognize that there are poetic uses of allusion, anthropomorphic, and other literary elements in these (and many other chapters of the Bible). It is not an academic history treatise. It does, however, treat with actual history. So, when we evaluate the content claims, we need to use all the tools available to us including putting it into literary context. Simply

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

saying there are poetic literary elements, therefore, *\_carte blanche\_*, there can be no claims to fact or reality in it simply won't do. See for example the account of crossing the Red Sea (see Exodus 14) and then the Song of Moses (see Exodus 15). The song is a poetic expression of the exodus.

One of the challenges to the mythological view is it doesn't explain why sin is universal. If we were morally neutral, it seems likely that at least some people on the planet of billions would be morally good. But none are and so why is it that we aren't morally neutral. It's pretty evident that death is not natural to man - Genesis 2:17, Romans 7:13, **\*\*Romans 5: 12 - 15\*\***. If we were born morally neutral, why do infants die? So the Mythological view simply takes universal sin as an axiom, but robs Genesis of its explanatory power of man's condition.

More importantly, from an exegetical point of view, the mythological view is also counter to other parts of the scripture - Paul taught a historical Fall (see Romans 5:14, 1 Corinthians 15:22 & 45, and 1 Timothy 2:13-14) as did Jesus (Mark 10:6, Mark 13:19, Mark 2:7 (Sabbath), and Matthew 19:5).

Remember, we want to gain our view out of the scriptures [exegesis], not impose our views into the scriptures [eisegesis]. So that requires being careful about the context: literary, the author and the audience, and within the Bible. One of the key concepts of this is scripture interpreting scripture. Since Scripture is inspired by God through many human authors, we believe that it is of one piece; there is a harmony and no contradictory elements of scripture. So, when we look at Paul and Jesus treating the Genesis account as factual, we must do so as well. Moreover, from the cultural context in which it was written, Jews don't include mythological creatures in their genealogies and yet Adam is clearly included in genealogical accounts (see Luke 3)

The **\*\*Realist\*\*** view of the fall contends that we were actually present at the fall in some sort of preexistent human soul. We fell when Adam failed. Given the limitations of time and the unlikelihood that any are tempted by this view, I'm not going to dive into the

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

arguments; I simply want to make you aware and if there's interest, refer you to Sproul's book to see the Realists "proof" texts and Sproul's rebuttal.

**\*\*Federalist or representative\*\*** view: "This view teaches that Adam acted as a representative of the entire human race. With the test that God set before Adam and Eve, he was testing the whole of mankind."

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (p. 69). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

Let's look at a couple of key scriptures the Federalist folks use as a basis for their view:

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. (Romans 8:20-22 ESV)

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

[12] Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man\_ [emphasis mine], and death through sin, and \_so death spread to all men \_because all sinned—[13] for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. [14] Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. (Romans 5:12–14 ESV)

[17] For if, \_because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man\_, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

[18] Therefore, \_as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, \_so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. [19] For as by the one man's

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:17–19 ESV)

We are still left with a big question. If God did in fact judge the entire human race in Adam, how is that fair? It seems manifestly unjust of God to allow not only all subsequent human beings but all of creation to suffer because of Adam. It is the question of God's fairness that federalism seeks to answer. Federalism assumes that we were in fact represented by Adam and that such representation was both fair and accurate. It holds that Adam perfectly represented us.

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (pp. 70-71). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

When God chooses our representative, he does so perfectly. His choice is an infallible choice. When I choose my own representatives, I do so fallibly. Sometimes I select the wrong person and am then inaccurately represented. Adam represented me infallibly, not because he was infallible, but because God is infallible. Given God's infallibility, I can never argue that Adam was a poor choice to represent me.

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (pp. 72-73). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

I am persuaded that the federal view of the Fall is substantially correct. It alone of the three we have examined does justice to the biblical teaching of the fall of man. It satisfies me that God is not an arbitrary tyrant. I know that I am a fallen creature. That is, I know that I am a creature and I know that I am fallen. I also know that it is not God's "fault" that I am a sinner. What God has done for me is to redeem me from my sin. He has not redeemed me from his sin.

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (pp. 73-74). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

Original sin is both the consequence of Adam's sin and the punishment for Adam's sin. We are born sinners because in Adam we all fell.

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (pp. 75-78). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

In this session, we reviewed the Genesis account of the first sin and reviewed different views of what that account (and other passages from the Bible) says about Original Sin. Next we'll turn our attention to the degree to which we fell in the Fall. Did we trip and scrape our knee or did we tumble we receive a mortal (spiritually speaking) head wound.