

"The First And Last Adams"

I PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS: even apart from the NT texts, the fall of the human race in the person of Adam indicates the special significance and role of the father of the human race. Adam's significance to the human race contrasts with Christ's significance to the human race. One delivered us into sin and Satan's dominance; the other freed us from both. How, then, does the Bible relate Adam and Christ?

Texts - I Cor 15:22;45,47,48,49; Rom 5:12-21

A. Note names and designations:

- I Cor 15:45 - Christ is called the "Last Adam."
- I Cor 15:47 - Adam called the first man, Christ is called the second man.
- I Cor 15:48-49 - Adam called the earthy (or earthly), Christ called the heavenly.
- Rom 5:14 - Adam is called a type (pattern or foreshadowing) of Christ.

B. Note parallelisms:

- I Cor 15:22 - in Adam // in Christ.
- all die // all shall be made alive.
- I Cor 15:45 - the first man, Adam, // the last Adam.
- a living soul // a life-giving spirit.
- I Cor 15:47 - the first man // the second man.
- out of the earth // out of heaven. (NIV obscures // ism).
- I Cor 15:48 - (fr GK) such the earthy man // such also the earthy ones.
- such the heavenly man // such also the heavenly ones.
- I Cor 15:49 - the image of the earthy // the image of the heavenly.
- we have borne // we shall also bear.
- Rom 5:15 - free gift // transgression.
- transgression of the one - the many died //
grace and gift of the one man (JC) - abound to the many.
- note: the "much more than" indicates progressive comparison.
- Rom 5:16 - judgment - one transgression - condemnation // free gift - many transgressions - justification.
- Rom 5:17 - transgression of the one - death reigned - through the one //
[[much more]_____] - those who receive will reign in life - through the One (JC).
(missing element in the parallelism: "by the act of righteousness of One").

- Rom 5:18 - one transgression - condemnation - to all men // one act of righteousness - justification - to all men.
- Rom 5:19 - one man's disobedience - the many - made sinners // obedience of the - the many - made righteous.
- Between vss 18 and 19 - all men // the many.
- Rom 5:21 - sin reigned - in death - _____ // grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life - through Jesus.
(missing element: "through Adam").

II OBSERVATIONS:

(Textual)

- 1) Parallelisms are structured as contrasts.
- 2) Two subjects, Adam and Christ, are analogically related.

(Theological)

3) Adam and Christ both play historically and theologically pivotal roles for the human race. All human destinies revolves around two poles, Adam and Christ, damnation and salvation. History knows two men, the first and second, the first and last. (First head and second head, first head and last head).

III VITAL QUESTIONS: God's dealing with the human race through Adam and Christ stand in parallel construction, albeit contrasting in nature.

1. What is the parallelism based on?
2. What are we able to learn about two subjects related to each other as type and analogs?
3. What qualities do Adam and Christ share, so that Adam is a type of Christ, and Christ is a Second and Last Adam?
4. Why can Adam be placed on the same plane as Christ?
5. What is this plane, this ground, this shared significance?

IV PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS:

1. How God deals with human beings through Christ would have some kind of parallel in how God has dealt with human beings through Adam.
2. In considering the relationship Christ sustains to the redeemed, we would expect an analogous relationship sustained by Adam to the fallen.
3. Ethical and moral principles associated with Christ in the accomplishment of salvation would also have applied to Adam and the fall in a negative way.
4. Romans 5:12-21 and the I Corinthians 15 verses enable us to reason deeply about the role of Adam, because of our grasp of Christ and his atonement.

5. Investigating how Christ is able to stand in the place of sinners to bear their sin and punishment opens up the issue of how the sin of Adam passes to the detriment of all mankind.

6. Likewise, understanding the relationship between Adam and his progeny illuminates the relationship between Christ and believers.

7. Thus we reason from Christ to Adam, to understand better Adam's place, then back to Christ again, to better see his atoning work.

V KEY THEOLOGICAL ISSUES:

1. Won't really help answer questions about the Second Coming, the rapture, the Great Tribulation or the Anti-christ.

2. Won't answer questions about spiritual gifts and continuing revelations.

3. Does address central issues of controversy:

- predestination and election,
- man's free will,
- suffering of the innocent,
- the condition of those who never hear the gospel,
- why God might permit evil into His perfect creation.

Why does it touch on all of these? We forget that these topics are linked by the common thread of Scripture's teaching about man's fallenness. The biblical doctrine of predestination focuses on man as fallen and needing rescuing. The biblical doctrine of man's fallenness says that even those ignorant of the gospel can be justly condemned, if we understand Adam and the role God designed for him.