

From Your Pastor

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question: WSC 16: Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

Answer: The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression

Scripture memory:

ESV **Romans 5:12-14:** *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, 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 (also Gen. 2:16,17; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21,22).*

An explanation: All mankind sinned in Adam, **except one:** The Lord Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, of the substance of the Virgin Mary, descended from Adam (Luke 3:38; Heb. 2:14-18), and was kept from the taint and contamination of sin from the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35; Heb. 7:26). Only He was not corrupted by sin, nor has he sinned in corruption. He is ***“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners...”*** (KJV, Heb. 7:26).

All other men are born and conceived in sin, and are guilty and deserving of God’s just judgment upon sinners (Psa. 51; Rom. 3:23). All men have sinned, but also do truly sin experientially in their daily lives. As the Apostle Paul testified on behalf of all sinners: ***“So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.”*** We are guilty before God for our sins in Adam, as well as guilty for our actual sins. We must remember that we are not sinners merely because we sin; we sin because we are sinners by nature. ***“Because all sinned...”*** (Rom. 5:12b). We are at root sinful: ***“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit”*** (Matt. 12:33; Eph. 2:1-3).

How did all mankind sin in Adam? God made a covenant with all mankind in Adam as His chosen representative of the whole human race. God chose the best representative for all mankind. Adam’s descendants were not only in him as a father, or as ***“in his loins”*** (Heb. 7:10), but Adam was the common Head and Representative chosen by God for all mankind. This covenant was called the ***“Covenant of Works”*** (Hosea 6:7; as we have learned in earlier lessons, see also Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 7) and life was offered not only to Adam ***but also to his posterity***. If Adam had stood, his posterity would have stood in obedient faithfulness; but Adam fell, and so all fell in and with him (Heb. 2:6-11).

Let us thank God for infinite wisdom and unsurpassing love for sinners in that He would send His Beloved Son in our nature to bless with salvation all those who believe in Him, those elected by Him before the foundation of the earth (Eph. 1:3-11), all for the praise of His glorious grace! What we could not do as fallen sinners, God could do, and did do, in our nature ***“for us”***!! (Rom. 8:3-4; Heb. 2:14-18). Christ did not take the nature of angels, but of Adam, of Abraham--our nature!! In our union with Jesus Christ, His perfect righteousness is made our righteousness! (Rom. 3:24-26). Christ is our Head, our Covenant Keeper, who makes us alive and gives us eternal life and hope in Him!! ***“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive”*** (1 Cor. 15:22).

A Prayer: Though fallen in Adam by nature, without God and without hope in the world (Eph. 2:14-18), you redeemed us, O Savior of our Souls, O lover of sinners, Blessed Redeemer of God’s elect! Thank you for willingly being our covenant head, and saying to the Father: ***“Behold, here am I and the children God has given to me!”*** (Heb. 2:13). You have freed us from our sins, from the fear of death and from slavery to the devil. ***“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood”*** (Rev. 1:5b). Let us live for you! Amen.

In Christ’s love,
Pastor Biggs

“Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready...”

- *ESV* **Revelation 19:7**