

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE FALL AND ITS RESULTS

I. THE TEMPTER, THE FIRST DISOBEDIENCE & DIRECT CONSEQUENCES

The Law **that** was given by God to the first couple, **provided** the opportunity for man's free will to exercise virtue and to be established in Goodness. **God** was **certainly** able to create man unchangeable and sinless **right from the beginning** but then he would have had the innocence of an infant and **would have been** an automatic **creation** of God without **any** moral value. The fact that God **foresaw** the Fall of the first-created is without any doubt. This Event **occurred** not because **He** had foreseen it and simultaneously predestinated it, **but because it was** a free act of man and was foreseen by God Who did not **want it to happen although He allowed it while** providing the means **for** its correction.

Holy **Scripture is** a valuable **Source with regard to** the events of the first Fall **although its** narration should not be taken **either** allegorically **or** as a myth incorporating philosophical ideas but **rather** as a historical text in its **broad outlines**. The importance of its history is clearly assured and witnessed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as well as by St Paul, the Apostle of the Nations. **This account informs us** that the beginning of the Fall was **due to** an external force: Satan in the form of a serpent who **urged** Eve to **taste** the Forbidden Fruit that God had instructed them not to eat or even touch. The serpent, **however**, convinced Eve that **disobeying** God was easy **because His** Commandment was so **simple** to carry out. Satan slandered the Creator and Benefactor of man and **incited** Eve "...to become equal to God..." **which is** a rebellious act against God. The tasting of the Fruit **of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that** followed **the temptation**, was a **most** serious act **that** included all the **elements similar to cause of** the Fall of Lucifer. It is obvious that Eve should have **resisted the temptation** right from the beginning **but** from the moment she paid attention to **Satan's lies**, her inner cosmos began to be soiled, and thus to her eyes the Fruit of the Tree of **the Knowledge of Good and Evil appeared to be** "...pleasant to the eyes to look upon and beautiful to contemplate."¹

Henceforth, the consequences that **followed were** according to the seriousness of the Disobedience. Immediately innocence was lost and they **realized** that they were naked.² As they **withdrew** from the Grace of God, the guilt of their conscience made them experience fear.³ At the same time their logic and intellect was darkened and **so** they imagined that they could **hide** from the **sight** of their Creator.⁴ Their life, which was now full of pain, groaning and suffering,⁵ became even worse as their hearts were enslaved to sinful desires and lustful thoughts. In addition to these, the animals **that**

¹ Gen. 3:7.

² Gen. 3:8.

³ Gen. 3:11.

⁴ Gen. 3:9, 11.

⁵ Gen. 3:17.

were subject to them before, became a threat. **However, the** worst result of the Fall was **physical death**⁶ **that followed their** spiritual death.

Nevertheless, human nature was not completely wiped out because man was not the inventor of evil, **having been** deceived by an external impulse.⁷ Hence God **offered** the first Promise, (“*Proto-evangelion*” = “*first good news*”) the first Promise of Hope, that in the future the Seed (the Incarnated Word) of the woman (the Ever-Virgin Mary, the Theotokos) **would** defeat the serpent⁸ (the Sacrifice on the Cross).

1. Conditions of the Fall

God gifted man with free will and instructed him not to partake of the Fruit from “...*the Tree of knowing Good and Evil...*” in order to **test** him and to establish virtue **within him**. Although man was **created sinless**, he had to express a steadfast willingness by **means of** his own free will and choice in upholding the Divine Commandment **so as to be strengthened**. Free will is **the voluntary** act of **the** will of man and is the result of **his intellect doing** good or evil.⁹

*“The tragedy of Creation came with the Fall, and continues in our perpetual instability. Prone to evil, we detest and fight evil; in our longing for the absolute Good, for God, we push Him away and resist Him.”*¹⁰

Many ask the question: “*Why did God not create man’s nature sinless so that he would be incapable of sinning?*” **Had He done so**, man **would simply be an** instrument without any moral value, acting **strictly out of** necessity. “*But whatever is done by force, is not acceptable to God...*” “...*for, if you deprive virtue of its free will, you deprive its essence.*”¹¹ “*Virtue is accomplished through the free will and not by force.*”¹² For if we did not have our free will then we would be **like automatons** of the Divinity and even our perfection, glory and honour would have been God’s and not ours. Man would have remained undeveloped in his moral conscience, not knowing the value of moral good and virtue. Man would have been as an innocent infant. Man, on the contrary, was created to be in the “*likeness*” of God. He was gifted with free will **that** offered him the freedom of choice between evil and good. Consequently, he had the “...*authority to remain and progress in good, as well as to turn from good and to become evil, whereas God allowed this because of the free will.*”¹³ **Since immovability and unchangeability** are ascribed only to the Beginningless and Uncreated Deity, man was **created moveable** and changeable **although it was also possible for him**, with the Power of God, not to change.¹⁴ Man’s

⁶ Gen. 3:20.

⁷ Gen. 3:14.

⁸ Gen. 3:16.

⁹ Cf. Mogilas, 1, 27, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, p. 607. Plato of Moscow, *Orthodox Teaching*, pp. 105-107. Evdokimov, *Orthodoxia*, pp. 95-102. Kefalas, *Catechesis*, p. 60. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, pp. 193-195.

¹⁰ Sophrony, *His Life*, p. 78.

¹¹ Origen, *Against Celsus*, IV, § 3, **B**, v. 9, p. 235.

¹² St. Basil the Great, *That God is not the cause of evil*, § 7, in Migne, *P.G.*, 31, 345.

¹³ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About man*, II, 26, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 924.

¹⁴ St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, p. 32.

Fall brought **about** the Fall of the events of Divine Grace and added **the materialistic way of life**¹⁵ to man.

Another question arises: “*Since God foreknew, why was the Fall not prevented? Could He not have prevented it?*” St Augustine’s **reply is that no one would** dare to believe **or say** that it was not **by** the Authority of God for the Angels or man who sinned, not to fall. **Nevertheless** God conceded and the Fall **occurred**. How and why? Surely not because He wanted it **to** serve His Plan **nor** because He wanted to manifest the Grace of His Love towards the pride and **wickedness** of man?¹⁶ **However**, this type of opinion would make God responsible for man’s fall **whereas it happened** not because God predestined it **although** He foresaw it as a free act of man and included it in His Plan, **simultaneously** providing Divine **Dispensation** (*Economia*) for its correction **through Salvation** in Christ. If God **had** prevented the Fall, it is obvious that He would **have** restricted man’s free will, **thereby removing** his freedom. **Under no circumstances did** God want man to be **forced** or **by necessity** become His **Likeness**.

Man had fallen **due to** his own foolishness and not because God foresaw **it**. God **certainly** did not want **Adam’s Fall although He accepted** it. **Consequently** Divine Holiness **that** always turns away from all **wickedness**, remained completely **blameless** and **trustworthy**, **whereas** immediately after the Fall God **requested Adam to account for his actions**.

We must **take care not to suppose** that although the Fall of man was the **reason** for **having** a Saviour, the Fall occurred **so** that the Saviour **would** come. **Christ** came because sin **was committed**. In other words, we do not believe that the Fall of Adam took place in order that Christ **would** come **because** then it would have **been as a consequence of** Adam’s Fall, predestined as a **requirement** for the Salvation in Christ, **which** had to **happen so that** Christ **would come to redeem mankind**. **On the contrary**, we accept that, although Adam alienated himself from God, God **is never** unprepared **to compassionately and wisely confront** the insult and **disrespect shown** by man who **received** so many **Divine Blessings**. **God**, having foreseen man’s Fall before all time, **prepared the Salvation** through Christ, which **grants an infinite wealth of** good things to fallen man.

One must also **cautiously approach** the opinion expressed by St John Chrysostom **according to whom** the first-created couple, even if they **had** not **been** tempted by Satan to partake of the Forbidden **Fruit**, would not have remained **faithful** because Adam was so easily convinced by Eve, that even **without** Satan, he would have quickly fallen **into** sin.¹⁷ **However**, according to this **view**, the Fall of Adam **appears unavoidable, presenting** the first-created **couple as being** without **any defence** against evil. **On the contrary**, because of primeval Justice, **they were** free of the tendency towards **sin** and **were** inclined towards Good, strengthened by **Divine Grace**. This **True Belief is evident in** those descendants of Adam, who, after the Fall, **obstinately rejected** the Salvation in Christ offered to them, **preferring** to remain in **sin**.¹⁸

¹⁵ Evdokimov, *Orthodoxia*, p. 121.

¹⁶ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIV, 27, in Migne, *P.L.*, 41, 436.

¹⁷ St. John Chrysostom, *To Stageiron*, I, § 5, in Migne, *P.G.*, 47, 435.

¹⁸ Trempeles, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 518.

In conclusion, the Biblical narration of the Fall of the first-created couple has an historic basis¹⁹ upon which the Doctrines concerning Original Sin and Salvation in Christ are based and therefore we cannot accept the allegoric interpretation of Philo, Origen²⁰ or any other symbolic interpretations.

Clement the Alexandrian considered the Biblical narration to include allegoric meanings,²¹ but essentially did not ignore the character of the text. Even more unacceptable is the opinion of the Rationalists, according to whom the Biblical narration consists of philosophical ideas vested with historic truth.

Among all the Books of the Old Testament, only the Apocryphal Books in the Old Testament Greek (Septuagint, O') mention that sin began through the woman and through that sin we all die. Furthermore, due to Satan's envy, death entered the world.²² In the New Testament, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, characterized Satan as being a "...murderer from the beginning..." who "...does not stand in the Truth, because there is no Truth in him..." since "...he speaks lies..." "...from his own resources."²³ He too referred to Satan's deception of the first-created couple. St Paul the Apostle of the Nations, when expressing his concern for the faithful of Corinth, that they might not be deceived "...as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness..."²⁴ and when he reminds us that "...Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression..."²⁵ he is clearly referring to the central points of the Biblical narration as being historical. Elsewhere in his Epistle to the Romans,²⁶ he referred to Original Sin as being transmitted from Adam to all mankind as a consequence of the first Transgression mentioned in the Book of Genesis.

2. The Tempter

According to the Biblical narration, the source of the first Transgression should not be sought in God or man but rather in an external suggestion and instigation, in an evil and crafty force that incited and deceived Eve into committing the Offence. According to the narration in Genesis, Satan, in the form of a serpent, deceived Eve.

St John Chrysostom observed that "...none of the wild beasts were frightening to the man, or to the woman, ... they acknowledged the submission and dominion as the calm animals of today, likewise the wild and untamed."²⁷ It is therefore understandable that the closeness of all animals was quite natural for Adam and Eve, so the presence of a serpent was no threat to her, neither did it seem strange to Eve

¹⁹ Kritopoulos, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 516.

²⁰ Origen, *Against Celsus*, IV, 40, in **B**, v. 9, p. 264.

²¹ Clement the Alexandrian, *Protrepticus*, XI, 3, in **B**, v. 7, p. 72.

²² Wisdom, 25:24; 2:24.

²³ John 8:44.

²⁴ 2 Corinth. 11:3.

²⁵ 1 Tim. 2:14.

²⁶ Rom. 5:12.

²⁷ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 16, § 1, in Migne, *P.G.*, 53, 127.

that the serpent spoke to her, **whether** literally or intellectually,²⁸ for it was the most “*prudent*” of all the animals upon the earth.

According to St John of Damascus, Satan used the “...*serpent, which was habitual to man amongst all the beasts, to approach him, speaking to him through its beautiful movements...*” **and** “...*using his own deceitfulness, he was able to introduce through it the worse kind of wickedness.*”²⁹

Another totally unacceptable opinion is that as soon as **Eve** saw the Tree of the **Knowledge of Good and Evil**, **her mind and heart** had **tempting** thoughts of **tasting** the Forbidden Fruit. **However**, Eve was created free from any tendency towards evil **and she** was in a **sinless state ruled** by primeval Justice **so** she could not **have** had **any such** thoughts **until** an external evil source urged and deceived her.³⁰

3. The Seriousness of the Transgression

The Offence **into** which Eve was deceived by Satan and, **by following** her, Adam, is **far** more serious than it first appears to be, **since** the Commandment of God was so easy to **obey and therefore no excuse is possible.**³¹

St Augustine **pointed out** that the Commandment not **to** partake **of the fruit of** only one tree amongst **such a** variety of fruit trees planted in Paradise for man’s use, was very **concise**, easy to remember and to **obey, given that** the first-created **couple** had no desire towards evil in their wills.³²

The **Instruction** came from man’s Creator Who had **bestowed** so much care and **protection upon** them, as well as **benefiting** them with so many **other** things. God did not demand from the first-created **couple** anything equal to **His Beneficences except to ask** them to **observe** a very small Commandment. Adam and Eve should **have** shown their gratitude to God **by obeying His Commandment merely** because of His Grace and Love that honoured **them as** “*masters.*” Therefore, no one should **consider their** disobedience in Paradise **as being insignificant.** The Fall occurred through the **tasting** of the Forbidden Fruit, which did not **incorporate** evil in its nature, but rather included disobedience³³ through **which** man violated and scorned God’s **Commandment.** **He Who** created in His “...*image and likeness...*” the **offenders** whom He placed as **rulers** over all the animals in Paradise, offering **them the wealth** of all good things, **had** not given **them** many difficult Rules **with the exception of** only one **whereby they** would have become accustomed to obedience to **their** Benefactor and Lord, as **had** the rest of all Creation.³⁴

²⁸ Theophilus of Antioch, *2 Autolycus*, § 28, in **B**, v. 5, p. 40. St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 16, § 2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 53, 127.

²⁹ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About Paradise*, II, 25, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 909.

³⁰ Trempelas, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 520.

³¹ Cf. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, p. 71.

³² St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIV, 12, in migne, *P.L.*, 41, 420.

³³ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 16, § 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 53, 133.

³⁴ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIV, 15, in migne, *P.L.*, 41, 422.

Moreover the **consequences** of the Offence present it as being “*a great sin,*”³⁵ bearing the **wounds** of Rebellion against God, relative and similar to **those** of the fallen angels **that cast** the Tempter into Eternal Darkness. **First** of all, we must **realise** that Eve was not tempted but allowed herself to be tempted, and **by** delaying through successive thoughts, **cooperated with** the Tempter, **making** the **ensuing** Offence the fruit of evil and sinful will and decision. “*She would never have to come to this action, if the evil and crafty would not have proceeded.*”³⁶

According to the observations of St John Chrysostom, Eve should **never** have **engaged** herself in **conversation** with the serpent **because** from the moment she **spoke** with **him**, **she immediately** heard his words and understood **them to be different to those of** the Creator’s Commandment. She should **have** expressed **her** detestation of **speaking** against the given Commandment **to him who dared to do so.**³⁷ Besides **that**, right from the beginning, the serpent manifested his evil intention **of twisting** the Truth **when he** said to Eve: “*Wherefore has God said, ‘Eat not of every tree of the garden?’*”³⁸ Eve should have separated herself **from this exposed wickedness by telling** him: “*Be gone, for you are a fraud...*”, **for he said**, “*Wherefore has God said, ‘Eat not of every tree of the garden,’ whereas God said, ‘I have given to you every seed-bearing herb, sowing seed which is upon all the earth, and every tree which has in itself the fruit of seed that is sown, to you it shall be for food’ and Commanded [them] to abstain only from one tree.*” But instead she “*...not only turned away, but she revealed the whole Commandment to the serpent, and thus threw the precious pearls to the pigs...*”³⁹ Up to this point Eve could be accused **of allowing** herself to be tempted.⁴⁰

4. The Tempter Slanders God

The Tempter, continually⁴¹ being “*...envious, slanders the Creator...*” for, since the moment Eve **listened to his** slander against her Creator and Benefactor **without protesting** and did not cut off the **conversation**, she entered into the sphere of the Offence.⁴² **As** St John Chrysostom asked: “*Was the serpent, who was discussing with her, from the same kind as she herself?*” No! **He** was from the animal kingdom **and therefore** “*...subject to her.*” **Nevertheless**, Eve “*...believed in the words of the serpent and thought that his advice was more credible...*” rather than “*...the Commandment which was given by the Creator.*” Therefore, “*...she was deceived in such a deceit that she was not worthy to be forgiven.*”⁴³

The serpent’s admonition **led** to Apostasy and Rebellion against God **because it caused** Eve **to partake** of the Forbidden Fruit **with the intention**, by tasting it, **of becoming** “*...like God.*”⁴⁴ Thus the Offence occurred **in anticipation** of becoming

³⁵ St. Augustine, *Opus imperfectum contra Julianum*, I, 105, in Migne, P.L.

³⁶ Ibid, *De civitate Dei*, XIV, 13, in Migne, P.L., 41, 441 and 420.

³⁷ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 16, § 2, in Migne, P.G., 53, 127.

³⁸ Gen. 3:2.

³⁹ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 3, §§ 3 and 2, in Migne, P.G., 53, 127 and 128.

⁴⁰ Ibid, in Trempeles, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 522. Kritopoulos, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 516.

⁴¹ Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, pp. 164-168. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, pp. 196-198.

⁴² Damalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 42-44. Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, p. 103.

⁴³ St. John Chrysostom, in Trempeles, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 522.

⁴⁴ Gen. 3:2.

“...equal to God...” because the starting point of this great sin was pride, by means of which the first man chose to deify himself in his imagination⁴⁵ and to be under his own authority rather than to be deified due to obedience to God.⁴⁶ It is obvious that the Offence into which the serpent drew the woman was an act of Apostasy, similar to that which had caused his own fall.⁴⁷ Lucifer had desired to place his throne above the Throne of God and likewise he urged Eve to stretch out her hand to grab the Forbidden Fruit, thereby becoming “...equal to God...” and rising above the Majesty of her Creator. Eve “...imagined becoming equal to God, rushed to partake, stretched forth her thoughts and mind, not seeing any alternative except to drink from the cup that was offered by the devil.”⁴⁸ Man has since then accommodated evil in his will and has introduced it into the world.⁴⁹

Eve, from that moment on was no longer an innocent and sinless woman. She had already been very seriously polluted within her inner world. Consequently, she saw the Forbidden Fruit as being “...pleasant to the eyes to look upon and beautiful to contemplate.”⁵⁰

St John Chrysostom wondered: “Why, before the advice of that crafty devil, Eve did not have such thoughts; nor saw the Fruit as being pleasant to the eyes or beautiful to contemplate?” Alas! The inner world of Eve had been contaminated and had given birth to desire, which from that moment became the inner tempter within the hearts of all Adam’s descendants, urging and enslaving them into sin.⁵¹

The Fall of the first-created couple appears to have all the characteristics of sin from the moment it violently entered the world. It is firstly a desecration of the Law given to the first-created couple whereby “...whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.”⁵² Due to this violation, the will of man was enslaved and his heart was filled with evil desire. From that exact instant “...out of the heart proceeded evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness and blasphemies.”⁵³ Love for God was pushed aside and replaced by bestial pride that substituted it with the human idol where once the Altar of God’s Worship stood. The devil said to Eve, “You shall be like gods...” and to accomplish this, the first-created took and ate of the Forbidden Fruit. “And with the hope of deification the devil tempts...” Eve “...and leads her to his own chasm.”⁵⁴

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve’s thoughts, emotions, decisions and actions were “God-centred” but the moment the Offence was committed, they became “ego-centred.” Man became selfish and egotistic, worshipping himself, demanding that

⁴⁵ Gen. 3:6. Cf. St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁶ St. John Chrysostom, *To Matthew*, Homily 65, § 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 58, 626. St. Augustine, *De civitatis Dei*, XIV, 13, in Migne, *P.L.*, 41, 441 and 420. Ibid, *Enchiridion ad Laurentium*, c. 45, in Migne, *P.L.*, 40, 254.

⁴⁷ Is. 14:12-13.

⁴⁸ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 16, § 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 53, 129. St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily XXXVII, pp. 174-178.

⁴⁹ Lossky, *Theology*, p. 80

⁵⁰ Gen. 3:7.

⁵¹ St. John Chrysostom, in Trempelas, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 523.

⁵² 1 John 3:4.

⁵³ Matth. 15:19.

⁵⁴ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About fore-knowledge and destination*, II, 44, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 980.

everyone else should turn to him and his self-deified **person**. In the darkness of man's selfishness, he was led astray from God, **falsely believing** that he loves himself **although** in reality **everything** he thinks, desires and acts **upon is** contrary to the true meaning of Love.

The consequences **that** followed **the** violation of God's Law by the first-created **couple** proved that nothing more could have been so catastrophic for them as their own selfishness and the desire to deify their own egos without the Grace and Love of their own Creator.

St John Chrysostom **remarked** that Adam "...with the hope of more knowledge and honour, **expelled** what he had then ..." **disgracing himself** and **sinking into** indescribable misery **because** "...not only **did he not become** equal to God, but he fell into the tyranny of death, **receiving** not only nothing from the eating of the Tree, but what knowledge he had he lost with the hope of higher knowledge."⁵⁵

5. The Direct Consequences

Holy Scripture informs us of the consequences of man's Fall, **whether** directly or indirectly. Thus, as soon as the first-created **couple** partook of the Forbidden Fruit, "...the eyes of both were opened, and they perceived that they were naked."⁵⁶ This was **due to the loss of their innocence as well as the loss of their vestment of Holiness,**⁵⁷ **at which point they vested themselves** with "fig leaves."⁵⁸ The Grace **that** overshadowed and strengthened **them, enabling them** to stand and progress in goodness, justice and virtue, **was withdrawn from them. Their** freedom from all passions and their innocence was lost **forever, depriving them** from communicating directly with their Creator.⁵⁹

The source of evil is found in the heart where good and evil **are** together, side by side: the heart became the workshop of the just and unjust.⁶⁰ The fact that when they heard the Voice of God **while** walking in the midst of the garden, they hid themselves,⁶¹ bears witness **to** their guilty consciences.⁶² **Man's** logic was darkened, **whereas** before it **enjoyed** the **Vision** of the Creator and **possessed** the **Knowledge** of Truth. Now it **had** been overshadowed by the **erroneous belief** that they could hide from the **Sight** of God. That sin darkened man's intellect is shown **by** the attempt of the first-created **couple** to justify themselves **before** God, imagining that they **could hide** their guilt before the All-knowing **Lord, while indirectly** blaming Him for their

⁵⁵ St. John Chrysostom, *To John*, Homily 7, § 1, in Migne, *P.G.*, 59, 63.

⁵⁶ Gen. 3:8.

⁵⁷ St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 23, § 5, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 963. Cf. Ibid, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 256-257. Kritopoulos, ch. 2, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 516. Mogilas, 1, 23, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 605. Dositheus, *Confession* 6, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, pp. 750 and 756. Androurtsos, *Symbolique*, v. 2, p. 182.

⁵⁸ Gen. 3:8.

⁵⁹ Cf. Damalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 45-52. Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, pp. 109-113. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, pp. 71-72. Ware, *Way*, pp. 76-81.

⁶⁰ Evdokimov, *Orthodoxia*, p. 123.

⁶¹ Gen. 3:9-10.

⁶² St. John of Damascus, *Exposition, About Paradise*, II, 25, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 913.

Fall.⁶³ “The Fall *deeply* alienated the ‘image’ of God without destroying it; that which was harmed was the ‘likeness.’”⁶⁴

The Decision and Condemnation of the Creator imposed upon Adam, was that “...*by the* sweat of your face you shall eat your bread until you return to the earth out of which you *were* taken...”⁶⁵ while the woman was condemned to a life of “...*pains...*” “...*groanings...*” and “...*submission to her husband.*”⁶⁶ Consequently, when the first-created man chose to obey the deceit of the tempter who wished to destroy him, immediately after committing the Offence, his body became not only mortal but also subjected to suffering. Hence that which was created Immortal became mortal and was exiled to the land of “...*thorns and thistles.*”⁶⁷

Man who was previously intellectual by nature, free in thought, having no experience of evil, knowing only good, suddenly had the desire of evil ruling in his heart. The devil implanted sinful thoughts in man’s intellectual nature, which enslaved him. Thus the “...*irrational desire...*” was raised to power “...*ruling the intellectual mind...*” of Adam who was stripped of God’s Grace⁶⁸ and although he was created to rule as a king, he is subsequently dominated by many evil and sinful passions,⁶⁹ thus becoming mortal.⁷⁰

Although man previously had the animals under his dominion, submitting to him as their king, now, because of sin, they frightened him.

Finally, man is to return to the earth from which he was taken. “*By the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread until you return to the earth out of which you were taken, for earth you are and to earth you shall return.*”⁷¹ Death did not occur immediately after the Offence and his exile from Paradise, as Adam lived “...*nine hundred and thirty years.*”⁷²

⁶³ Gen. 3:13-14.

⁶⁴ Evdokimov, *Orthodoxia*, p. 120.

⁶⁵ Gen. 3:18. Cf.: St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 23, § 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 962. Cf. *Ibid.*, in Hadjephraimides, p. 255. Boulgareos, *Theologicon*, p. 391.

⁶⁶ Gen. 3:17.

⁶⁷ Gen. 3:19.

⁶⁸ St. Isidorus of Pelusion, *book IV, epistle 204*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 78, 1292. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *To the Beatitudes*, Homily 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 44, 1223. St. Athanasius, the Great, *Against Apollinarius*, Homily 2, § 6, in Migne, *P.G.*, 26, 1141. St. John of Damascus, *Exposition, About Paradise*, II, 25, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 909 and 981. Kefalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 66-67.

⁶⁹ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*, II, in Migne, *P.G.*, 45, 545. Theophilus of Antioch, 2 *Autolytus*, § 17, in *B.*, v. 5, p. 33. St. John of Damascus, *Catechesis*, II, 11, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 913. Androustos, *Symbolique*, v. II, pp. 184-185.

⁷⁰ St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily V, p. 48.

⁷¹ Gen. 3:20.

⁷² Gen. 5:5.

6. The Darkening of the “*In the Image*”

Although man’s Offence against God was serious and the consequences **were inherited** by all **Adam’s descendants**, **human** nature was not **completely** abolished.⁷³ Adam was not the inventor of evil as in the case of Lucifer but was deceived into it. Consequently he lost the primeval Justice of Grace, the possibility of being sinless, innocent and Immortal but preserved **his** “...*in the image*...” **even though** in a wounded condition **that was** capable of being restored. The hope **that** God gave to the first-created **couple** is known as the “*Proto-evangelion*” (“*First Good News*”). “...*And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; he shall watch against your head, and you shall watch against his heel.*”⁷⁴

In these words of the “*Proto-evangelion*,” God gave His Promise that the serpent (Satan) **would** be completely defeated by Eve’s descendant (Christ) Who **would** crush his head (Crucifixion), whereas the devil **would cause** a small injury to Him (death on the Cross). **In addition, the Divine Promise revealed** that the Fall of the first-created **couple** was not irreparable because within man **there** were still powers and **qualities capable of restoring** him to his **original** condition.⁷⁵

Hence the Holy Fathers of the Church saw the manifestation of God’s Mercy and Love within the punishments, especially in the penalty of death,⁷⁶ for God did not want sin to be Eternal and for this reason **permitted man to taste** death, **thereby restoring** him to his first glory.

St John Chrysostom stated that the first-created **couple** was exiled from Paradise on purpose **so that they could** not touch the Tree of Life, **thus causing them Eternal Sin**. He also observed that the Master, even when punishing the first couple, did not **cease His Graciousness**.⁷⁷

Theophilus of Antioch used the example of a clay pot, which, if necessary, **could** be recycled **or** reshaped, **becoming** as new again. Likewise man who was wounded by sin dies “...*in order to be found at the Day of Resurrection healthy, spotless, just and Immortal.*”⁷⁸

St Gregory of Nyssa **added** that in death “...*man as an instrument made out of clay returns to the earth, in order to be cleansed from the filthiness...*” which he **got** from sin and to be “...*regenerated through Resurrection.*”⁷⁹

St Irenaeus proclaimed that God was **indulgent to** man because, through the punishments that He provided, man **would emerge** victorious. He also compared the

⁷³ Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, p. 199. Dositheus of Jerusalem, *Decree XIV*, in Link, *Apostolic Faith Today*, pp. 58-59.

⁷⁴ Gen. 3:16.

⁷⁵ Kritopoulos, ch. 2, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 516. Mogilas, 1, 23, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 605. Dositheus, *Confession*, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, p. 756.

⁷⁶ St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Homily 38*, § 12, in Migne, *P.G.*, 36, 324. St. Isidorus of Pelusion, *Book III, epistle 195*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 78, 880. Theophilus of Antioch, 2 *Autolycus*, in *B*, v. 5, p. 39. St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily 4, p. 41.

⁷⁷ St. John Chrysostom, *To Genesis*, Homily 18, § 3, in Migne, *P.G.*, 53, 151.

⁷⁸ Theophilus of Antioch, 2 *Autolycus*, § 26, in *B*, v. 5, p. 39.

⁷⁹ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechesis*, ch. 8, in Migne, *P.G.*, 45, 33.

Fall of Adam to the fate of Jonah who was swallowed by the sea beast in order to be saved, **to glorify God and to become** subject to Him.⁸⁰

The Holy Fathers who proclaimed that Christ **descended into** Hades and **granted both** Adam and Eve Salvation, **challenged** the opinion of Tatianus that Adam, after the Fall, was condemned to Eternal Condemnation.⁸¹ **Their** opinion is supported by the **Book of the** Wisdom of Solomon **that states**: “*She preserved the first formed father of the world, who was created alone, and brought him out of his Fall, and gave him power to rule all things.*”⁸²

II. THE HEREDITY OF ORIGINAL SIN

The Offence in which the first-formed had fallen, created **guilt** within them for which they were punished by being exiled **to** the land of pains, mortality and death **as well as being in a** condition of sinfulness. **Keeping** in mind that Adam was the father of the human race and **therefore all humanity came from** him, with his Fall the entire human race fell **as well**. Mankind was **contaminated** and henceforth **all inherit** Original Sin, which **drowns humanity in wickedness and which** is manifested in each individual in the internal divisions and disagreements, the frigidity and enmity amongst **people**, the estrangement **of** mankind and God and generally speaking, the alienation of peace from our inner world. We are sinners and within us a powerful tendency rules, which **draws** us towards evil.⁸³

The feeling of guilt is generally manifested not only in all men but also through **their** offered sacrifices **by means of** which all religious men seek to make peace with the Divine. **Even** history itself, which **recalls** mankind **committing bloodshed** and all kinds of abomination, is a witness of this heritage **that** polluted all generations.

Holy Scripture bears witness to this, **particularly** the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans⁸⁴ **while** the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church and the **Ecclesiastical** Scholars systematically **dealt** with **this topic**. The Apologists, **such as** the Africans Tertullian and St Cyprian who first described Original Sin as being a “*wound*” **and especially** St Irenaeus, **spoke** clearly about it. The Alexandrians Clement and Origen, although under the **Platonic** influence, **presented** the Teachings concerning Original Sin **according** to the Teachings of the Church. The three Cappadocian Fathers (St Basil the Great, St Gregory of Nyssa, St Gregory **the Theologian** of Nazianzus) and St John Chrysostom did not deal specifically with the subject **although** their writings dealt **with corrupt** human nature. St Augustine dealt more specifically with Original Sin, and clarified many Teachings.

⁸⁰ St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 20, § 1, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 942. Cf. Ibid, in Hadjephraimides, p. 245.

⁸¹ Ibid, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 23, § 8, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 690. Cf. Ibid, in Hadjephraimides, pp. 257-258. Tertullian, in Migne, *P.L.*, 2, 72 and in Migne, *P.L.*, 1, 1248. St. Hippolytus, *Heresies*, VIII, 16, in *B*, v. 5, p. 343. Origen, *To Matthew*, 8, 126, in Migne, *P.G.*, 13, 1777. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Homily 37*, § 7, in Migne, *P.G.*, 36, 289. St. Augustine, in Migne, *P.L.*, 44, 183.

⁸² Wisdom 10:1.

⁸³ Plato of Moscow, *Orthodox Teaching*, p. 107. Kefalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 243-246. Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, pp. 113-115. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, pp. 72, 202-205.

⁸⁴ Cf. Meyendorff, *Theology*, pp. 143-146.

The Teaching of the heritage of Original Sin is the main basis of Salvation in Christ Who is the new Adam. It is proclaimed as one of the most important Doctrines of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

1. The Witness of Holy Scripture

Holy Scripture bears witness to the fact that all mankind is under the tyranny of sin and the shadow of death. In the Book of Genesis, God warned us that "...every one in his heart is intently brooding over evil continually."⁸⁵ Job wondered: "Who shall be pure from uncleanness? Not even one; if even his life should be but one day."⁸⁶ Similarly King David, complaining of his sinfulness, besought God "...not to enter into Judgement..." with His servant, for in His "...Sight no one living is righteous."⁸⁷ Elsewhere he stated: "They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one."⁸⁸ In agreement with King David is the son of King Solomon who prayed: "...For there is not a man who will not sin."⁸⁹ The Prophet Isaiah exclaimed: "Nay, your iniquities separate you and God, and because of your sins He has turned away His Face from you, so as not to have mercy upon you. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with sins; your lips also have spoken iniquity, and your tongue meditates unrighteousness. None speaks justly, neither is there True Judgement: they trust in vanities, and speak empty words; for they conceive trouble, and bring forth iniquity."⁹⁰ And again he said: "...For our iniquity is great before Thee, and our sins have risen up against us: for our iniquities are in us, and we know our unrighteous deeds. We have sinned, and dealt falsely, and revolted from our God: we have spoken unrighteous words, and have been disobedient; we have conceived and uttered from our heart unrighteous words. And we have turned Judgement back, and righteousness has departed afar off: for Truth is consumed in their ways, and they could not pass by a straight path. And Truth has been taken away, and they have turned aside their mind from understanding."⁹¹

Hence our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ cautioned us that "...out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness and blasphemies..."⁹² and He emphasized the importance of every man being Regenerated because "...that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit..."⁹³ and consequently "...unless one is born of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."⁹⁴

St John the Apostle, Evangelist and Theologian, in his 1st Epistle wrote: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us."⁹⁵ St James the Adelphotheos (the stepbrother of our Lord), said: "...we all stumble in many

⁸⁵ Gen. 6:6; 8:21.

⁸⁶ Job 14:4-5.

⁸⁷ Psalm 13(14):3.

⁸⁸ Psalm 142(143):2.

⁸⁹ 1 Samuel (1 Kings) 8:46.

⁹⁰ Is. 59:2-4.

⁹¹ Is. 59:12-15.

⁹² Matth. 15:19.

⁹³ John 3:6.

⁹⁴ John 3:5.

⁹⁵ 1 John 1:8.

things...”⁹⁶ while St Paul **proclaimed** that “...we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin...”⁹⁷ and **that** “...all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God.”⁹⁸ In his Epistle to the Ephesians, he reminded the Christians of Ephesos that “...you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins...”⁹⁹ “...in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.”¹⁰⁰

The **sinful corruption of human** nature is **our** heritage from the fallen Adam.¹⁰¹ “For mortal born of a woman is short-lived, and full of wrath. Or he falls like a flower that has bloomed; and he departs like a shadow, and cannot continue. **Hast Thou** not taken account even of him, and caused him to enter into **Judgement** before **Thee**? For who shall be pure from uncleanness? Not even one; if even his life should be but one day upon the earth.”¹⁰² “...For God made not death: neither has He pleasure in the destruction of the living...”¹⁰³ “...For God created man to be Immortal, and made him to be an image of His own Eternity. Nevertheless through envy of the devil death **entered** the world.”¹⁰⁴ King David confessed: “...Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”¹⁰⁵ **However**, the classical Biblical references are those of St Paul found in **his** Epistle to the Romans, which states: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”¹⁰⁶ “...For if by the one man’s Offence death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of **Grace** and of the **Gift of Righteousness** will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as through one man’s Offence **Judgement** came to all men, resulting in **Condemnation**, even so through one Man’s **Righteous Act** the free **Gift** came to all men, resulting in **Justification of Life**. For as by one man’s **Disobedience** many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s **Obedience** many will be made **Righteous**.”¹⁰⁷

In conclusion, as sin and death **entered mankind through Adam** and through him we all became sinners, likewise through Christ **Who** is the new Adam of the **New Creation**, **Life** came into the world and to **all who** believe in Him. And as through Adam mankind inherited sin and death, likewise through Christ we become **inheritors** of **Justice**, **Sanctification**, **Salvation** and **partakers** of the **Resurrection** and **Immortality**.

⁹⁶ James 3:2.

⁹⁷ Rom. 3:9.

⁹⁸ Rom. 3:23.

⁹⁹ Ephes. 2:1.

¹⁰⁰ Ephes. 2:2.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Plato, *Orthodox Teaching*, p. 56-59.

¹⁰² Job 14:1-5.

¹⁰³ Wisdom 1:13.

¹⁰⁴ Wisdom 2:23-24.

¹⁰⁵ Psalm 50(51):5.

¹⁰⁶ Rom. 5:12.

¹⁰⁷ Rom. 5:17-19. Kalogerou, *Maria*, p. 59. Theodoretus of Cyrus, *To Romans*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 82, 100. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *To Romans*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 74, 789.

III. THE ESSENCE OF ORIGINAL SIN

a) ORIGINAL SIN AS A CONDITION

The Offence committed by Adam brought sorrowful **consequences upon** him **that made** his condition sinful and permanent. This condition of sinfulness deprived **him of Divine Grace that Sanctified him, removed his** primeval condition of **Holiness and Justification, thereby allowing** evil desires of the flesh to rush into **his** nature and, **as a result,** through him, **causing** these **sins** to be inherited by all his descendants. Thus man became naked, **being separated** from God's Grace **and wounded** in nature. (*"Spoliatus gratuitis, vulneratus in naturalibus"*)¹⁰⁸

The **loss** of primeval justice and the desire of the flesh (*concupiscentia*) darkened but did not **destroy the** "image" in man. As **his** mind was darkened, **he** became unable to understand **or to approach** the **Divine and Heavenly Truths**. His will became weak and was easily dragged into sin and evil and finally, the reign of sexual desires enslaved **him** to the flesh.

1. The Darkening of Man's Logic and the Weakening of His Will

St Paul **cautioned** us **of** the darkening of man's logic when he **spoke of** the "natural man"¹⁰⁹ who lives "...according to the flesh and has only the inborn and natural prudence..."¹¹⁰ for he believes that "...the things of the Spirit of God..." "...are foolishness."¹¹¹ The man who bears the nature of Adam because of the **inherited** corrupted nature and the increasing persistence and habit **of wickedness**, became incapable of receiving the Enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, **just** as the **ailing** eye is unable to **clearly** see the light of the sun.

This darkening of man's mind does not make the descendants of Adam completely incapable **of reaching** out to search **logically for** their Creator¹¹² because "...since the creation of the world His invisible Attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His Eternal Power and Godhead, so they are without excuse."¹¹³ **Furthermore,** "...although **they** knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened."¹¹⁴ "...Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to **dishonour** their bodies among themselves."¹¹⁵ Man **subsequently** worshipped the Creation rather than the Creator, opening the doors **to idolatry and so** mankind bowed down before false gods. This does not mean that man was completely lost and incapable of receiving **Divine Enlightenment**. **Instead** God **granted that** man be restored by Divine Grace, in order **for him** to be raised up and **to rediscover** his Creator from Whom he **had distanced** himself and

¹⁰⁸ Bedas, in Bartmann, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 321.

¹⁰⁹ 1 Corinth. 2:14.

¹¹⁰ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *To Romans*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 74, 789.

¹¹¹ 1 Corinth. 2:14.

¹¹² Cf. Kefalas, *Catechesis*, p. 70.

¹¹³ Rom. 1:20.

¹¹⁴ Rom. 1:21.

¹¹⁵ Rom. 1:24.

thereby to renew the previous joyful Communion that had been discontinued because of the Offence.

Concerning the weakening of man's will and its enslavement under the desire of flesh, it is worthwhile to point out the words of St Paul to the Romans: "*For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the Law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a Law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*"¹¹⁶

Even after the Offence, the moral instinct and the Divine "image" that were not completely destroyed, remain within man.

St Cyril of Alexandria observed that "...the Image of God was violated by the invader sin and the characters were not bright anymore, but dim and darkened because of the Offence."¹¹⁷

Origen confronting the pagans who placed man on the same level as wild beasts and worms, observed that "...the intellect is not something to be ascribed to a worm..." because man, even after the Offence, "...still had reasons towards virtues; these cannot be ascribed to worms and cannot be compared to those men who hold virtues and their seeds cannot be completely lost." "The nature of the intellect does not allow even to compare the human nature to that of the animals, even if it makes mistakes out of ignorance."¹¹⁸

Man does not preserve his free will only "...in power to do evil, lying and sinning..."¹¹⁹ Neither does his free will only commit evil nor are the virtues of the pagan splendours evil, ("splendida vitia") these being expressions used by St Augustine that are clarified in his writings.¹²⁰

The great personalities of the Old Testament, through God's Grace, proved worthy of those who lived under the Grace of the New Adam, although they lived afar from the Grace in Christ. And yet they were exalted: Abel for his faith in offering a sacrifice to God, Enoch for pleasing God, Noah for his righteousness, Abraham for his obedience and faith, Moses for his faith, Joshua for his faith that conquered Jericho, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and Samuel and all the Prophets,¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Rom. 7:14-24. Cf. St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily 5, pp. 48-51.

¹¹⁷ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *To John*, book II, ch. 1, in Migne, *P.G.*, 73, 205.

¹¹⁸ Origen, *Against Celsus*, IV, 25, B, v. 9, p. 249.

¹¹⁹ St. Augustine, *Sermo* 156, § 12, in migne, *P.L.*, 38, 856.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, *De civitate Dei*, 18, in migne, *P.L.*, 41, 161.

¹²¹ Heb. 11:4-31.

“...who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”¹²²

In the paganistic world one finds high **standards** of moral and religious truths, which do not lose their value because they have been mixed with errors and foolishness. These values remain **as** good and beautiful acts, just **like precious pearls that found in the depths** of muddy places. Besides the Word of God before His **Divine Incarnation**¹²³ “...was the True Light which gives Light to every man coming into the world.”¹²⁴ Consequently, pagans are not deprived **of** the **Enlightenment**, **Grace** and **Divine Providence** of God.

Mankind, without the Incarnation of the Word and Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, would have remained cursed because death would have **been** an eternal tyrant from **which** neither the just nor **the** righteous of the Old Testament could **have** escaped.¹²⁵ **However, through** God’s **Divine Providence** they were not destined to **perish**. This **is evident** in the discussion between Abraham and God **Who promised** that “...If there should be in Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole city, and the whole place for their sakes.”¹²⁶ **Therefore, for the sake of the righteous people,** God would not have destroyed the city even if **He had found only “ten” righteous souls.**¹²⁷ **Furthermore,** “...since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...”¹²⁸ God could not ignore those righteous ones.

Because of **Original Sin** mortality ruled over mankind **who** was unable **to reach moral Perfection** without **Salvation** in Christ. The virtues **that** man achieves **through** his natural capabilities **are** not only imperfect but also **contaminated by** selfish and egoistic intentions. The fact that these virtues cannot be characterized as “...*splendid evils...*” is **apparent when one is** justified through faith in Christ **although** he has not yet been perfected in holiness. His acts of good deeds and virtues **still** appear to be imperfect and not free **of** egoism and the **exaltations** of **vainglory**. **Perfection** in holiness is achieved only after many years of hard struggle against sin and its **wicked** passions.

b) ORIGINAL SIN AS GUILT

In the classical statement of St Paul in his Epistle to the Romans: “...*through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because all sinned...*”¹²⁹ **humanity** not only became partakers of death through the **Offence** of Adam but they **also** became guilty of his sin. **Initially sin entered man as a violent tyrant** and death was its fruit.

¹²² Heb. 11:32, 33-34.

¹²³ John 1:14.

¹²⁴ John 1:9.

¹²⁵ Cf. Plato of Moscow, *Orthodox Teaching*, p. 62.

¹²⁶ Gen. 18:26.

¹²⁷ Gen. 18:32.

¹²⁸ Heb. 12:1.

¹²⁹ Rom. 5:12.

1. The Inheritance of Original Sin

Original Sin consists of true and real guilt, **not** only in the punishment imposed as a result of Adam's **Offence**. Adam's sin was not committed by his descendants, and consequently for them it **had nothing to do with** their own will, **merely being** inherited as a sinful condition. Sin is not only the separate inner or external acts ("peccatum actuale"). **It is** especially the condition of sin ("peccatum habituale"), **due to** specific sinful deeds **that further** strengthens and **cultivates** it. **Original Sin is the** heritage of a sinful condition **for all mankind, which is** imputed to us **not as personal** sin (direct imputation), but as **the** sinful condition of each person ("vitiositas"). Between Adam's guilt and the guilt of his descendants **there** "...exists a great difference: ... in Adam the Offence of God's Law was committed by his own will whereas in his descendants it is by inheritance and unavoidable."¹³⁰ "The Original Sin in the First-created should be understood as their own sin as well as the sinful condition of their nature in which the Offence led them. Whereas in Adam's descendants it is the sinful condition of man's nature with which he is born into the world."¹³¹

St Cyril of Alexandria **believed**: "The nature became ill through the sin of the one, Adam. Thus the many became sinful not as sinning with Adam, for they had not existed, but as being from his nature, which fell into the law of sin."¹³²

St Anastasios of Sinai also **felt** that: "(Our forefather) heard the 'you are earth and to the earth you shall return' and man from immortal became mortal and was **bound** to the bondage of death. Because he had **borne** children under this condition, those who are born from him who is mortal, are born mortal. Consequently, we became **inheritors** of the curse, which is in Adam, not because we are punished **due to having** disobeyed that **Divine Law** but because (Adam) became mortal **and** sin was transmitted to his seed."¹³³

In opposition to **that opinion**, St Augustine expressed **his belief** that all mankind existed within Adam at the time of the Offence.¹³⁴ We must stress **too**, that Adam exists within each and every one of us, **being** the "...old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts..."¹³⁵ of sin, **and whom** Adam became after the Offence. Certainly we **exist** in Adam in power and not as intellectual beings **that** act individually. **To this day, whenever anyone** is born, he has **Adam** within him. **The** root of a tree exists in **its trunk, branches, leaves and fruit**. They **all** exist, are fruitful and matured because they are **firmly held** and nourished by the roots. Likewise each **human being** is the fruit **that** originated from the polluted root of Adam, bearing the **sap** and seeds of the root **as well as** the whole tree from which it originated. From Adam "...we have borne the image of the man of dust..."¹³⁶ and in order to live the

¹³⁰ Androutsos, *Dogmatique*, v. I, pp. 156-157.

¹³¹ Makarios, *Enchiridion*, I, pp. 589-599.

¹³² St. Cyril of Alexandria, *To Romans 5:18*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 74, 789.

¹³³ Anastasios of Sinai, *Question and answers*, 143, in Migne, *P.G.*, 89, 796.

¹³⁴ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 14, in Migne, *P.L.*, 41, 386.

¹³⁵ Ephes. 4:22.

¹³⁶ 1 Corinth. 15:49.

New Life of the New Adam, it is necessary that “...*the man of dust...*” who is formed in the image of the forefather, be crucified with Christ¹³⁷ and, putting off the “...*old man...*”¹³⁸ we must put on “...*the new man.*”¹³⁹ Holy Scripture does not **explain** how men inherit **Original Sin**.

2. What Happens to the Unbaptised Infants After Death?

The question of what happens to unbaptised infants after death has always troubled the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church and has been the subject of many different opinions. God has great compassion towards those who have not yet expressed the tendency towards sin as descendants of Adam but brings His “*Wrath*” upon those who willingly participate in the Offence of their forefather.

Tertullian who objected to infant Baptism, did not accept that the guilt of Original Sin was real sin to infants.¹⁴⁰

St Cyprian, acknowledging the inborn corruption and recommending infant Baptism, believed that it is necessary for infants to be cleansed from guilt that was not due to their own actions.¹⁴¹

Clement the Alexandrian referring to the words of Job: “*For who shall be pure from uncleanness? Not even one; if even his life should be but one day upon the earth...*”¹⁴² observed “...*let them say to us where had the born infant committed fornication or how had it fallen into the curse of Adam that which had done nothing?*”¹⁴³

St Gregory of Nazianzos believed that infants who die unbaptised, although having been born under Adam’s sinful nature, have not yet expressed that sinful tendency when overtaken by early death and consequently “... *are neither glorified nor condemned by the Just Judge, being unsealed and naïve, although harmed by the damage (of Adam’s offence) rather than their actions, unworthy of punishment or honour.*”¹⁴⁴

St Gregory of Nyssa noted that “...*we must not imagine that the immature death of infants brings equal punishment of pains as to those who died sinning nor that they are equal in glory to those who struggled for all virtues.*”¹⁴⁵ He also characterized the infant as being “*infinitely pure*” and having “... *no infection of the soul’s eyes in order not to participate in the light.*”¹⁴⁶

¹³⁷ Rom. 6:6.

¹³⁸ Ephes. 4:22.

¹³⁹ Col. 3:10.

¹⁴⁰ Tertullian, *De baptismo*, 18, in Migne, *P.L.*

¹⁴¹ St. Cyprian, *Epist.* 64, in Migne, *P.L.*

¹⁴² Job 14:4.

¹⁴³ Clement the Alexandrian, *Stromata*, III, 16, in *B*, v. 8, p. 4, v. 8, p. 46.

¹⁴⁴ St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *To the holy Baptism*, Homily 40, § 23, in Migne, *P.G.*, 36, 389.

¹⁴⁵ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *About the infants which are taken before their time*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 46, 192.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, *About the infants which are taken before their time*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 46, 177.

The abovementioned Holy Fathers did not consider that the sinful condition existed in infants and consequently, their participation in the inheritance of original sin would only be created by conscious and free expression of that sinful condition.

St Augustine was of the opinion that infants were worthy of hell but that they would merely suffer the lightest of punishment.¹⁴⁷

St Isidoros of Pelusion was of the opinion "...that infants, although sinless, should be Baptised..." and accepted that in Baptism they "...are cleansed from the stain of the Offence, which was transmitted to their nature." However, he emphasized the importance of Baptism because through it "...we receive in our nature Charismata..." since, through Christ, "...we do not receive the counterbalancing medicine for our wound..." "...but the beauty, honour, glory and dignity."¹⁴⁸

3. Original Sin and the Theotokos (the Mother of God) and Ever-Virgin Mary

Another question that arises is: "Because of the general heredity of Original Sin, had the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary been affected?" Since St Paul proclaimed that "...we all have sinned..."¹⁴⁹ this means that there can be no exceptions concerning the consequences derived from the ancestral Offence. On the contrary, it is declared that God is "...the Saviour of all men..." through the Ever-Virgin Mary, the Ever Blessed Theotokos, who also acknowledges Him as her own Saviour.¹⁵⁰

St John of Damascus taught that "...after the acceptance of the Holy Virgin..." which was expressed with the words "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to Thy Word..."¹⁵¹ "...the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the Power of the Highest overshadowed her according to the words of the Lord, which the Angel said, and thus she was cleansed."¹⁵² Additionally in his 1st Homily on the Nativity of the Theotokos, he praised her father, St Joachim, addressing him, among other expressions, as: "Oh All Blessed Joachim, from whom came the all immaculate seed..."¹⁵³ an obvious reference to the natural conception of the Theotokos. According to the Symbolic Books of the Orthodox Church, the Theotokos is proclaimed by the Church as also being guilty of Original Sin as are all men ... and that she was conceived and born naturally in the manner of all men. However the Holy Spirit came upon her before she conceived the Word of God, in order to cleanse her and make her a vessel worthy of hosting the Word. She therefore required cleansing from Original Sin.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁷ St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 93, in Migne, P.L.,

¹⁴⁸ St. Isidorus of Pelusion, book III, *Epistle* 195, in Migne, P.G., 78, 880.

¹⁴⁹ Rom. 5:12.

¹⁵⁰ Luke 1:47.

¹⁵¹ Luke 1:38.

¹⁵² St. John of Damascus, *Exposition, About the way of the conception of the Word and His divine incarnation*, III, 46, in Migne, P.G., 94, 985.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, *To the nativity of the Theotokos*, Homily 1, § 2, in Migne, P.G., 96, 664.

¹⁵⁴ Kritopoulos, *Confession XVII*, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, p. 550. Boulgareos, *Theologicon*, p. 431. Trempelas, *Dogmatique*, v. I, pp. 559-561.

Roman-Catholic Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Ever Blessed Virgin adopted in 1854, according to which “...the Theotokos was kept free from the stain of Original Sin...”¹⁵⁵ is unacceptable.

IV. THE PUNISHMENTS AGAINST SIN

The warning by God to the First-created that “...in whatsoever day you eat of it, you shall surely die...”¹⁵⁶ was realised after the Offence when misery became an inseparable and unavoidable consequence of sin. The privations, the groans, the pains, the hardships of human nature resulting in the death of Adam’s descendants are the retaliation and the “wages of sin.”¹⁵⁷ The complete fulfillment of this Divine warning will occur after death for all who remain in the evil heritage of the First-created. Then sin will be crushed for all eternity, which is referred to as “the second death” in Holy Scripture.¹⁵⁸

1. The Meaning and Differentiation of the Punishments of Sin and the Misery Caused by it

When we speak of the sentence and punishment of sin, we mean in general the suffering and sorrow that followed the Offence, which first Adam and then all his descendants afterwards had to face, according to the just but painful price of disobedience to God’s Law. Although these punishments in the long term are used as pedagogic ways of restoring the fallen but goodhearted man, nevertheless their direct character is the satisfaction of Divine Justice, which was offended by the violation of God’s Law given in the Garden of Delight.

The extent of the punishments are divided into “temporary” and “eternal” conditions. The temporary punishments are split into those that are “natural” or those that directly result from sin and those that are “positives” having been directly imposed by God.

It was correctly stated that all punishments are “positives” because they have their reason in God Who is the Creator and Provider of the natural and moral order.¹⁵⁹ However, for example, the historic worldwide catastrophe of the Great Flood,¹⁶⁰ the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah¹⁶¹ as well as the terrible afflictions that were imposed upon Pharaoh,¹⁶² were as a result of direct Divine Wrath upon sin.

The relationship between sin and suffering is understandable and no one can seriously doubt it because surely if there was no sin, no crime would have existed nor would there be callous abandonment of the weak and poor. There would be no illness

¹⁵⁵ Bulla “Ineffabilis Deus”, 10th Decenber 1854, by Pope Pius IX. See: Schmaus, “Mariology”, in *Encyclopedia of Theology*, p.901

¹⁵⁶ Gen. 2:17; 3:4.

¹⁵⁷ Rom. 6:23.

¹⁵⁸ Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8.

¹⁵⁹ Androustos, *Dogmatique*, v. I, p. 162.

¹⁶⁰ Gen. 6:6-9:17.

¹⁶¹ Gen. 19:24-25.

¹⁶² Ex. 2:17-18, 20-21; 3:2, 6, 17; 9:3, 10, 18, 23; 10:4, 13-15, 21-22; 11:5, 12, 29.

or death and consequently no misery or suffering. This connection could be characterized as direct, since sin immediately separates us from God in Whom true happiness exists. Accordingly our separation from Him creates chaos and a great chasm of unhappiness. Sin brings forth wretchedness and vice versa, which again creates new levels of unhappiness as the sinner falls from one gulf of misery to another even worse. Sin is the seed and unhappiness its fruit containing more seeds. Unhappiness increases through impatience and worries that are created within the sinner and which drive him to other, greater sins. Not only the punishments and sufferings imposed by God but also the troubles that others bring upon people as well as the trials we create ourselves, must be the fruit of sin. The evil, guilty and sinful conscience makes the unhappiness of the sinner heavier and weakens his resistance further.

Concerning the burden of the conscience, we must recall that when Adam sinned, he was overcome by fear and hid himself when he heard God walking in Paradise.¹⁶³ Every descendant of Adam is conquered by the same fear and voice of conscience, which always reminds him of the Offence, justly condemning and strictly rebuking him. For example, the brothers of Joseph remembered with bitterness their disregard for "... the anguish of his soul when he besought us and we hearkened not to him.." and realised that "... therefore has this affliction come upon us."¹⁶⁴ Furthermore Herod, when he heard about our Lord Jesus said to his servants: "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him."¹⁶⁵

The easiness of falling from one sin into another is manifested by the examples of King David¹⁶⁶ and Jeroboam who was killed together with his household by Baasa because of sins that he had committed against Israel.¹⁶⁷ The alienation from God of the unrepentant sinner increases due to his complete abandonment by God and by his falling into "...a debased mind..." as well as into sinful passions "...which are not fitting."¹⁶⁸ "Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves."¹⁶⁹

It is obvious that this progress towards evil of the unrepentant sinner makes him an object of God's Just Wrath. The story of Aman, which is recorded in the Book of Esther,¹⁷⁰ Pontius Pilate who washed his hands of the Blood of the Innocent One,¹⁷¹ Ananias and Sapphira who by lying to the Apostle Peter found death,¹⁷² Elymas the Sorcerer¹⁷³ and so many other catastrophic events that are mentioned throughout history such as the Great Flood, the annihilation of Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh's terrifying afflictions and the destruction of Jerusalem all bear witness to the fact that many times God intervenes as the Just Judge of those who commit evil. Therefore the fear of the pagans was not mere superstition when they faced such

¹⁶³ Gen. 3:9.

¹⁶⁴ Gen. 42:21-22.

¹⁶⁵ Matth. 14:2.

¹⁶⁶ 2 Samuel (2 Kings)11:1-12:31.

¹⁶⁷ 1 Kings 15:25-30.

¹⁶⁸ Rom. 1:28.

¹⁶⁹ Rom. 1:24.

¹⁷⁰ Esther 7:9-10; 9:13

¹⁷¹ Matth. 27:24

¹⁷² Acts 5:1-11.

¹⁷³ Acts 13:6-11.

enormous disasters. However, there have been particular occasions when “...the goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering...” of God conceded certain punishments in order to lead the sinner “to repentance;”¹⁷⁴ or the Lord has chastened some so that the sinners would “...not be condemned with the world.”¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, when God chastens those whom He loves “...and scourges every son whom He receives...”¹⁷⁶ He does so in order that the genuineness of their faith “...being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.”¹⁷⁷

What awaits the unrepentant sinner at the end of his life is eternal suffering and punishment. Before his death, he struggles to forget about death, the fear of which makes him feel guilty and which becomes a nightmare for him. However, when he faces death, his agony is increased. Darkness overshadows his soul and he has no hope of Divine Mercy to which the repentant sinner and the just look forward. If for the just death is considered as a bridge from this world of suffering to the world of Joy and Blessedness, for the unrepentant sinner death is the horrible, fearful executioner who will deliver him to the Supreme and Just Judge.

Natural evil that exists in nature is caused because of the Fall of man. According to St Paul: “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 labours with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the Redemption of our body.”¹⁷⁸

2. The Miserable Life of the Sinners After Death

If the fruits of sin are so painful in this temporary life, how much more painful will it be in the Afterlife? Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ assured us of Eternal Hell that awaits “...the devil and his angels...”¹⁷⁹ and all those who died in sin, being unrepentant. They “...will go away into Everlasting Punishment.”¹⁸⁰ All those who do not accept Christ will not participate in the Everlasting Life of Blessedness because “...he who believes in the Son has Everlasting Life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abides on him.”¹⁸¹ “The Son of Man will send out His Angels, and they will gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the Furnace of Fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”¹⁸² St Paul stated that God will punish the sinners “...in Flaming Fire, taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall

¹⁷⁴ Rom. 2:4.

¹⁷⁵ 1 Corinth. 11:32.

¹⁷⁶ Heb. 12:6, 7-8.

¹⁷⁷ 1 Peter 1:7.

¹⁷⁸ Rom. 8:20-23.

¹⁷⁹ Matth. 25:41. Rev. 20:10.

¹⁸⁰ Matth. 25:46.

¹⁸¹ John 3:36.

¹⁸² Matth. 13:41-42.

*be punished with Everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord and from the Glory of His Power,*¹⁸³ whereas St John the Apostle and Evangelist **believed** that *“...the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the Second Death.”*¹⁸⁴

When comparing the two types of death, that of natural separation of the soul from its body and that of Eternal Condemnation, the former **seems secondary** and less important. The natural or biological death will end and be no more¹⁸⁵ whereas the “*Second Death*”¹⁸⁶ shall **continue** for all Eternity. Also all those who, before the General Resurrection and Second Coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, had pleased God, **such as the** Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs and all the Just, **and who had** lived in **Christ, within** them the “*Second Death*” has ceased **and** they, having drank from the Cup of Death, await the Common Resurrection.

We do not have a complete knowledge of the nature of the punishments **that follow** death because in Holy Scripture they are **simply** described with images of this world. **Nevertheless**, in reality there is no similar image with which they can be compared. Even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, used expressions, examples and images **from daily life to** express Heavenly Truths. Terms **such** as “*Hell of Fire*,”¹⁸⁷ “*...where the worm does not die and the Fire is not quenched...*”¹⁸⁸ the place of “*torment*”¹⁸⁹ and “*Lake of Fire*”¹⁹⁰ are **but a few** examples.

From the Parable of the Rich **Man** and Poor Lazarus, we are informed **of** the two existing conditions of Paradise and Hell. The souls **are completely** conscience of their existence and **are able to experience** pain or happiness. **Souls** recognize one another even if they are in different conditions. The souls in Hell can communicate with God but the prayers of those who are in Eternal Torment are **never** fulfilled. Those who struggled in their life will be rewarded, whereas those who have done evil will be thrown into Eternal Punishment without any **hope or** comfort.¹⁹¹

The fact that the punishments will **last** all Eternity surpasses human understanding, for **just** as the Righteous will inherit Eternal Life for all Eternity, likewise those who will be condemned will suffer for all Eternity. Also, our Lord Jesus Christ, said: “*Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to Eternal Condemnation.*”¹⁹² St Paul stated in his Epistle to the Hebrews: “*...it is impossible for those who were once Enlightened, and have tasted the Heavenly Gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the Good Word of God and the Powers of the Age to*

¹⁸³ 2 Thess. 1:8-9.

¹⁸⁴ Rev. 21:8.

¹⁸⁵ Rev. 21:4. 1 Corinth. 15:26.

¹⁸⁶ Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8.

¹⁸⁷ Matth. 5:22, 29; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47. Luke 12:5. John 3:6.

¹⁸⁸ Mark 9:44.

¹⁸⁹ Luke 16:24, 25.

¹⁹⁰ Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8.

¹⁹¹ Luke 16:19-31.

¹⁹² Mark 3:28-29.

come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.”¹⁹³

Those who **describe** Eternal Punishments as being cruel, do not take **into** consideration that the sinful man, **blinded** by his guilty conscience, is always **lenient towards** himself, **imitating** his forefather’s **justification of his deeds**. They also do not **consider the impossibility of anyone being** more **compassionate and merciful** than God Who loves mankind and Who judges each and everyone accordingly.

It is obvious that those who have been freed from Original Sin through Salvation in Christ, also partake **of the** sufferings and trials of this world **although** these trials have lost their character as punishments **having** become a Paternal pedagogic system. *“If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.”¹⁹⁴* St James urges all **brethren** to *“...count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.”¹⁹⁵* Our Saviour Jesus Christ, encouraging His Apostles and Disciples, said: *“In the world you will have tribulation...”¹⁹⁶* **They** also partook of the Cup of Death *“... as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the Judgment.”¹⁹⁷* *“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from Heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”¹⁹⁸*

¹⁹³ Heb. 6:4-6.

¹⁹⁴ Heb. 12:7-8.

¹⁹⁵ 2 Corinth. 5:1-4.

¹⁹⁶ John 16:33.

¹⁹⁷ Heb. 9:27.

¹⁹⁸ James 1:2-3.