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THE FALL AND RESTORATION OF MAN – Part 2

By David Ralph Werrell

In the first article of this series we looked at the writing of William Tyndale regarding the theology and consequences of the Fall. Because of the Fall we are dead in trespasses and sins. We closed part 1 with a passage from Tyndale in which he explains that the fall has made us heirs of vengeance and our bondage to sin leads us to consent to the Devil's will.

Tyndale then lists many kinds of sin that afflict man in his relationship with other men, and our greed and diligence for material things whereby we deceive ourselves, and busy ourselves as we lust for the material things of this world: and reject God's law to love God with our whole being, and our neighbour as ourselves.

When Adam sinned, God set limits to the power Satan had over creation: even as God set the bounds Satan could go in his attack on Job, as we read in Job, Chapter 1. Then, in the next chapter we read how Satan asked for greater freedom to attack Job further than he had first been allowed (Job 2.) I believe that having had the boundaries set by God, Satan later returned to God and had those boundaries extended, as we read in Romans chapter 1:20-32.

I do not think Tyndale would have said that it was only the earth growing weeds and women having problems in childbirth, since, as Paul wrote, *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."* (Romans 8:22). What has happened to the very good creation God made? *It is the whole creation that groaneth and travaileth*, What is good about the suffering in the world? Disease surely is a result of the Fall. I believe, today, Tyndale would also have said human DNA is also affected by The Fall; as is every aspect of life and the created world; otherwise "the whole creation" is an untrue statement of reality.

What about our modern belief that almost all wrong things can be explained by our genes? Tyndale would have called us back to God's Word, God's creation was very good. To everything God created, vegetation and animals alike, *"God blessed them saying, Be fruitful and multiply."* (Genesis 1:22.) *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth ..."* (Genesis 1:27, 28.) After the Flood, God told Noah, *"Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. ... And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply."* (Genesis 9:1,7.) However, today there is a growing tendency to argue that the sexual act has other purposes than that of being fruitful and giving birth. This brings us back to Romans¹.

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools. ... Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves. ... For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another: men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." (Romans 1:21-27.) And Paul writeth, (Romans 1.) that the heathen, because when they knew God, they had no lust to honour him with godly living, therefore God poured his wrath upon them, and took his Spirit from them, and gave them up to their hearts' lusts, to serve sin, from iniquity to iniquity, till they were thoroughly hardened and past repentance.

This has a bearing on the question of homosexuality. Tyndale would have agreed with those who said it was our genes that affected our sexuality, but since they were part of fallen creation since Adam sinned homosexuality proved that they had suffered with the Fall. He would have asked the question, “Can a homosexual relationship obey God’s command, ‘be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth?’” If that is not possible it is sin and a result of the Fall. Of course the same applies to many of the evils men do – as we claim they are only natural!

Tyndale is clear about the state of man since the fall. Our existence on earth is part of our deadness. His clearest description of this comes in his earliest writing, his New Testament of 1525 – The Cologne Fragment. In this he wrote of man’s fallen state.

“By nature, through the fall of Adam, we are the children of wrath, heirs of the vengeance of God by birth, yea, and from our conception we have our fellowship with the damned devils under the power of darkness and rule of Satan; while we are yet in our mother’s womb; though we show not forth the fruits of sin, yet are we full of the natural poison from where all the evil deeds spring. ... And as the fruit does not make the tree evil; but, because it is an evil tree, it brings forth evil fruit, when it is the season for fruit. Even so our evil deeds do not make us evil; but because our nature is evil we therefore both think and do evil, and are under vengeance, under the law, convict to eternal damnation by the law, and are contrary to the will of God in all our will; and in all things consent to the will of the fiend.”

Again, *“It is not possible for the natural man to consent to the law that it should be good; or that God, who makes the law, should be righteous. Man’s wit, reason, and will are so fast glued, yea, nailed and chained unto the devil’s will.”*²

For Tyndale God’s plan for his creation has to be realised. He cannot allow Adam’s sin to mar his purpose. Tyndale always moves swiftly from the effects of the Fall to the new creation in Christ. God had promised Adam that Satan’s power would be broken, and that God would restore the world to its original condition without compromising the justice and righteousness of God.

*Neither can any creature loose these bonds, save the blood of Christ. ... Who peaced the wrath of God, brought the favour of God to us again; obtained that God should love us first and be our Father, and that a merciful Father ... and will give us his Spirit again (who was taken away in the Fall of Adam) to rule, govern, and strengthen us; and to break the bonds of Satan wherein we were so strongly bound.*³

I believe that many of the problems facing mankind – including some that have appeared more recently – Tyndale would have associated with the Fall. For many are “dead in trespasses and sins,” walking “according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:1,2). In the same way, Tyndale also believed that God’s chosen people were not protected from Satan’s attacks; as Paul wrote, in the 11th chapter to the Romans, regarding God’s rejection of his chosen people, Israel, *“For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee”* (v. 21). Also, in 1 Corinthians 10, relating to his chosen people and warning us of the same dangers, *“But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, ... Neither let us commit fornication, ... Neither let us tempt Christ, ... Neither murmur ye, ... Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”* (I Cor. 10:1-12).

“For we are so weak and uncertain, that if it stood in us, there would of a truth be no man saved; the devil, no doubt, would deceive us. But now is God sure, that his predestination cannot deceive him, neither can any man withstand or let him; and therefore have we hope and trust against sin.”⁴

To be continued in the next issue.

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Endnotes:

- 1) Tyndale, PS-1, Obedience of a Christian Man, Prologue upon the Gospel of Matthew, p. 472
- 2) Tyndale, 1525, p 10
- 3) Tyndale, 1525, p 10
- 4) Tyndale, PS-1, Prologue upon the Epistle to Romans, p. 505