

How Did We Get the Sin Within?

Fred R. Coulter—March 6, 2010

What is the greatest enigma that human beings, cutoff from God, cannot solve? That is, human evil. They can't solve it, very hard to even control, but they don't know the answer. So everything that people try to be good and to do good fails. The reason is that even though they may have a concept of Satan the devil, they don't know who he is or what he is or what he has really done, and how he affects human beings. Nor do they understand about the creation of man and that *man was made*

- to need God
- to need His Spirit
- to need His laws and commandments

So those are the sources of the enigma. Now we know that Rev. 12 shows us that there was war in heaven and that old serpent, Satan the devil, took a third of the angels with him in his rebellion. With that war in heaven we know that it was also on the earth before human beings were ever created. That resulted in the destruction of the earth and the first flood, as we find in Gen. 1:2. That's why it says, 'Darkness covered the face of the deep and the earth became without form and void.'

They do not realize either that Satan wanted to become like God. So not succeeding in that, and then with the creation of man, God gave men choices. We have to go back to the beginning here, so we can understand the source of evil, and what happened to mankind after Adam and Eve fell—because they did fall. There was the fall of Satan the devil, that's true, but there was also the fall of Adam and Eve.

This is a summary of everything that God did to renew the earth and prepare it for human beings. Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, *it was exceedingly good.*" So everything God did was good. God had it ready for man, and in the beginning, God created man in such a way that he was neither good nor evil. He was rather in a neutral position and given choices.

So after God created Adam He put him in the garden. Genesis 2:16_[transcriber's correction]: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may freely eat of the every tree in the garden, But you shall not eat of the tree of *the* knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die'" (vs 16-17). Now Adam was created with a full functioning mind, a full thinking language, was able to communicate with God, and so Adam and Eve were unique in as much as that they were formed by the hand of God, made directly by Him.

We are not told how long that they were in the Garden of Eden before God sent the serpent in. Some people think it was days, some people think it was years, some people think it was decades. Either way we're not told. But nevertheless, we can be guaranteed this: God would not send in the serpent unless Adam and Eve had been instructed sufficiently to make the right choice. So that's the closest we can come to it. The reason that we have what they did recorded here for us is because we will see that is the same sin as Satan.

Satan said, 'I will get above the clouds. I will be like the Most High.' So this is exactly what he told Adam and Eve. So let's read it here, Genesis, the third chapter. As one man has mentioned to me, we've gone over this how many times, but how much more is there for us to learn here, and how much more do we understand Gen. 3 and 4, when we put the rest of the Bible together and look at the whole picture. Because as we know, the way to study is 'line upon line; here a little, there a little; precept upon precept,' and you put it all together.

We will find the origin of human sin. Then we will ask the questions:

- Why cannot other subsequent human beings born of man and woman be in a condition where they are not sinful?
- How did that happen?
- What happened?
- What occurred?

This is significant because it's the first man and the first woman. Let's also understand this: Satan and the angels fell in their war before God renewed the earth and before Adam and Eve were created.

Genesis 3:1: "Now the serpent was more cunning than any creature of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, '*Is it true that God has said, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?"*'" Now the way that you get someone to respond is say something that is not true. And the way you engage them is that they will respond to you to correct you. Isn't that a normal reaction?

Verse 2: "And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may freely eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the middle of the garden, God has *indeed* said, "You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die"' (vs 2-3). Did she understand God instructions? *Yes, she did!* Did Adam understand God's instructions? *Yes, he did!* But God gave man free moral agency and all men and women must

choose. So here we have the situation. A lot of people say, ‘Well, look what the woman did. She added to it you shall not touch it lest you die.’ Perhaps that was subsequent instruction that God gave, rather than an added thing, and say, ‘Well, that’s the way women always do, they add to it.’ Let’s not blame the women. A lot of people say, ‘Well, Paul writes that Eve was deceived and transgressed and Adam wasn’t deceived.’ But, as we will see later, the punishment for sin came through Adam, not through Eve. Eve was part of it.

Now notice what the serpent said to the woman, v 4: “‘In dying, you shall not surely die!’” So he’s admitting that they would die. ‘But really you’re not going to die.’ Just like today all religions have some form of spirit existence after you die, saying when you die you’re really not dead.

Just like in the so-called ‘Christian’ religion today, you go to a funeral and the minister, preacher, or the priest says, ‘Aunt so-and-so, or uncle so-and-so’—I remember one that his hobby was golf. ‘So Bill is up there in heaven playing golf with Jesus right now.’ Yet his corpse is right here in the casket. So ‘in dying, you shall not surely die.’ Isn’t that what the Muslims have? They have exactly the same thing—don’t they? If you jihad and blow yourself up, you go right to heaven and you’re awarded seventy-two virgins. I know a quick way to stop all this jihad. Get a message from Allah saying, ‘We’re out of virgins up here, guys, stop it.’

So as we’re going along here, we’re not concerned with how long a time they had. Some people said, ‘Well, why didn’t they have children before Cain?’ Undoubtedly God stopped the production of children or didn’t allow the beginning of the production of children until after He determined what they were going to do when confronted with Satan. So they had to have enough knowledge, they had to have enough education, they had to know that if you know to do good and do it, that it is not sin.

Satan comes along and changes the scenario. Now what I want you to understand is that this is exactly the same thing in what they called the Hegelian three step, which is this: you have

1. *Thesis*, which is the truth you understand
2. *Anti-thesis*, which is an opposite view questioning what you understand. They use it all the time today—don’t they?
3. *Synthesis*: you have a new understanding of things after you combine the thesis and anti-thesis.

Then the new synthesis becomes, what people call *paradigm* or *synthesis*. Anyone who tries to explain how evil comes about today and how Satan works, that’s exactly how they’re going to explain it. We

have it right here in Gen. 3. And because men do not understand the origin of evil and they do not understand the sin within, they do not understand Gen. 3 and what happened. That begins to become the whole key.

Man and woman were made in the likeness and image of God and they *need* God, they *need* His Spirit, they *need* His laws and commandments, even though Adam and Eve were created neutral, neither righteous nor sinful, but had to choose. This had to come about and it determined the course of all the rest of humanity. So this is why especially when you atheists and you have agnostics and you have those who reject the Bible, and they view human beings as good, and if we just treat them good and if we give them the right tools, and the right everything, then everything will be fine. They do not account for Satan, they do not account for evil, and they don’t know how to solve it.

So let’s go on and see how evil came to the human race. Now here’s something that they couldn’t resist, v 5: “‘For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened and you shall be like God, **deciding** good and evil.’” Not just *knowing or experiencing* good and evil, but *deciding* good and evil. That’s the only way they became like God. In eating of the tree they did not become more righteous. In the eating of the tree they sinned and became evil. That’s then where human nature, in the way that we understand it today, began.

Verse 6: “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasing to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise... [That’s what everyone wants to be—right? God made us so that we want to become wise, we want to become educated, we want to do things. Isn’t God’s way that way, too? *Absolutely!*] ...she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.” So he was standing there watching this whole conversation go on.

Let’s come back here to James 1, and let’s see the process she could have stopped this and he could have stopped it at any time. What would have been the right answer for Eve to give? ‘God said not to eat it. I don’t care what you say, I’m not going to eat it.’ So what happened? Let’s see how James, the brother of Jesus, explained how sin works and we will see that’s exactly how it worked there in Gen. 3.

James 1:13: “Do not let anyone who is tempted say, ‘I am being tempted by God’... [Were Adam and Eve tempted by God? *No!* Who was the tempting? *Satan!* He’s called *the tempter*, too—right?] ...because God is not tempted by evil, and He himself tempts no one *with evil*.” What He does, He gives choices. Will you obey or will you not obey?

Now let's see the same process that happened with Eve here.

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust.... [That's what happened to Eve. That also happened to Adam—didn't it? *Everything they did was a choice.* She chose to talk to the serpent. She could have said, 'You're not supposed to be in here.' Adam was given the duty of guarding the garden and he should have kicked him out, but didn't do it.] ...But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust.... [A tree to be desired to make one wise. Lust is a wrong desire.] ...And after lust has conceived... [You think about it. You mull it over. You consider the proposition. God said, 'Don't eat it.' The serpent said, 'If you do, you're going to be like God. *You can decide* what's right and wrong, good and evil. Why do you need God to tell you what's right and wrong, good and evil?' Exactly the same thing.] ...And after lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death" (vs 14-15). Doesn't matter how many years long you live. It's like Solomon said, 'If you live a thousand years twice told and die, that's vanity.'

So that's the process we saw back here in Gen. 3. Let's go back here and see what else happened. Let's see the origin of human sin, because this becomes the entire proposition of the problems with human beings, their individual lives, their families, their communities, cities, states, countries, nations, governments, churches, religion.

Genesis 3:6: "...and he ate. And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.... [Now everything that happened after they partook of the fruit, whatever the sin was that they were doing, was directly against God.] ...And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Then Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.... [That's what people think today, they can hide themselves from God. 'If we do it in the dark, nobody knows. If we do it when no one else is around, how can anyone find out?' *God knew* where they were.] ...And the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where *are* you?'... [God wanted them to respond to Him.] ...And he [Adam] said, 'I heard You *walking* in the garden, and I was afraid because I *am* naked, and *so* I hid myself.' And He said, '**Who told you that you were naked?**'" (vs 6-11).

Before they sinned and went against God, being naked was natural because they were the first man and the first woman. They saw no evil, they saw nothing wrong with it, so we don't know what

sort of activity went on other than the fact that it was probably some kind of sexual sin. How involved in the sexual deviation and perversion that may have been there, we don't know and any speculation is only speculation, and you can't base everything on speculation. The only thing we can base it upon is the laws that God has concerning sex later on.

And typically, no one wants to take responsibility. "And the man said, 'The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate'.... ['So God, it's Your fault. If you hadn't given me this woman, I wouldn't have eaten of the tree.' *Really?*] ...And the LORD God said to the woman, 'What *is* this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate'" (vs 12-13). And we're going to see a little later on, what happened to Adam and Eve, because their nature was changed. When they were created they were neutral. Though they were in the flesh, they weren't subject to death, nor did they have eternal life. They were just physical.

The comment was made: When they went against God and disobeyed God, that was the sin. Every other activity after that is secondary to that major sin. This is the same sin that human beings repeat over and over and over and over and over.

"And the LORD God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this you *are* cursed above all livestock, and above every animal of the field. You shall go upon your belly, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He will bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel'" (vs 14-15). This is actually the first prophecy of a Messiah to save them.

Now let's see God's judgment here. When there is sin, there must be judgment and with the judgment comes a penalty. "To the woman He said, 'I will greatly increase your sorrow and your conception—in sorrow shall you bring forth children.... [So that shows she had no children up to that point.] ...Your desire shall be toward your husband, and he shall rule over you.' And to Adam He said, 'Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you saying, "You shall not eat *of* it!"—the ground *is* cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life. It shall also bring forth thorns and thistles to you, and *thus* you shall eat the herbs of the field; In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you shall return'" (vs 16-19).

No man other than Christ has been able to overcome that, and there's a reason why He was able to overcome it. So what do we see? We see the

whole environment changed—don't we? Now let's see what else was changed.

Let's come back here to Romans, the fifth chapter, and let's see what happened because of Adam's sin that he wanted to decide good and evil for himself. Is that not the same sin that everyone does today, even atheists? At least Newdow said he has a religion and that is atheism. He feels as though that he does good things. Where does all good come from in the first place, which is very contradictory for a person to say, 'I don't believe in God, but yet I don't believe in committing adultery. I don't believe in murder. I don't believe in lying and stealing.' Where did that come from? *Came from God!* That's why one who doesn't believe in God is a fool, who says in his heart, 'There is no God.'

Let's see here is a key pivotal Scripture, Romans 5:12. What happened to Adam and Eve, because they died. They were not subject to death until they chose to sin against God. The greatest sin was ***deciding for themselves*** what was good and evil, because that's a prerogative of God.

Romans 5:12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world... [Not through Eve, though she did start it. Adam could have said to Eve, 'Throw that food on the ground. What are you doing over there at the tree picking it?' But he didn't. She took it and ate it and said, 'Well, Adam, you know this is really pretty good stuff. Really! Why don't you have a bite?' So he ate. It was sin! The sin was *choosing to disobey God* and to abrogate to himself the prerogative of God to decide good and evil. *That's the sin!*] ...Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death..." *Dust you are and unto dust you shall return. In dying, you shall surely die.*

Now notice what happened and this is a critical translation and in translating this correctly, I think this one verse occupied more of my time and research and going into the Greek to understand really what happened. So here's the best translation that we can get out of the Greek: "...and in this way, death passed into all mankind... [How did it pass to *all mankind*? Some people believe that babies are born pure and innocent. Really, by the time they're about nine months old, you can see human nature already working in them—right? Maybe even sooner than that! But notice: death passed ***into*** all mankind. Everyone has a death gene. Everyone has the nature of death.] ...and it is for this reason that all have sinned" (v 12).

If you have a nature of death, how can you of your own, without God, without the commandments of God, without the Spirit of God, *do good* as God defines *good*? *You can't!*—even though you try to be a do-gooder. Look at

government. Government is filled with do-gooders, they're called bureaucrats—right? What happens with every bureaucratic thing? It ends up a horrible mess. If you don't think that is true, witness what is happening in the world today in every nation. So having the nature of death you also have the nature of sin, because 'it is for this reason that all have sinned.' Because not only were Adam and Eve created incomplete—needing the Spirit of God, needing the laws and commandments of God—all human beings have been created incomplete. We have the added component that we have the law of death within us. And as we will see a little later on, it is also called *the law of sin*—and this becomes important.

Now just to clarify it, v 13: "(For before *the* law, sin was in the world.... [When you know that sin is the transgression of the law, you know that there was law. But this is before the law given to Israel. Sin was in the world.] ...However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist... [So that's telling us that law did exist.] ...Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the *one* Who was to come" (vs 13-14).

Nobody sinned directly in the face of God like Adam and Eve. The question is: Are we talking about Satan's sin as well, or just humans. No, we're talking about human sin here. So this tells us that the sin of Adam and Eve directly in the face of God, in the presence of God, after being created personally by God, after being taught personally by God, chose with deliberation to transgress against God, ***to abrogate to themselves the prerogative to decide good and evil.*** When that happened, then God's judgment changed their nature. Instead of being neutral, so if they would have chosen to eat of the tree of life, they would have been on the path to eternal life. So now instead of being neutral, since they chose to sin and eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *to decide for themselves what is good and what is evil*, death passed into them. It was an absolute sure thing.

We'll just go ahead a little bit further, because this is the knowledge that is missing in trying to create a society that is going to be good and just and right and without crime, if we could put it that way, sin, because they do not account for the sin within.

Romans 7:23: "But I see another law within my own members... [That means within his own being, in other words in his mind. The question that even psychologists and psychiatrists and even theologians who reject God, cannot understand the sin within. Why is it that good people seems like they've had a good life all their life and then they

reach a point and they flip out and they sin and they commit evil, murder, adultery, fornication, perversion.] (Here's why): ...I see another law within my own members... [This is the downward pull of evil of human nature that every human being has that is inherited genetically going all the way back to Adam and Eve.] ...warring against the law of my mind... [And the law of his mind was with the Spirit of God. This is why there is a battle between right and wrong, good and evil in our minds to overcome, which many people in the world don't have, because they're not trying to overcome the evil. They all succumb to the evil in varying degrees.] ...and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members"—part of his very being!

The ultimate result is this, Romans 8:1. Here is the only deliverance from death and the law of sin: "Consequently, *there* is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death" (vs 1-2). Hasn't removed it, but delivered you from the clutches of it, so that you can overcome it—overcome sin within. And at the resurrection, after having had the Spirit of God, you'll be resurrected.

Human beings think—especially legislators and religionists—how do you stop evil? *You make a law!* Did a law ever stop anyone from doing anything, if they chose to go against the law, they chose to sin? Doesn't everybody know murder is wrong? A lot of people today, because they've been educated in the wrong way don't think anything's wrong with adultery and fornication. A lot of people think you shouldn't steal, but if you do and don't get caught, that's a good thing. So you see the way human nature does. Understand this: ***No law anywhere has any power to force anyone to do anything, not even the commandments of God; because there is choice that all human beings have to exercise.***

Let's look at the conclusion of the matter and then we'll fill in the rest of it as we go along. So we have within us the law of sin and death. That's part of our human nature. That's why even the very best of us, even being converted, do not evil thoughts come along? What do you do with them then? How do you get rid of them then? We'll talk about that, because you know deep down inside you understand the evil of your own human nature to a certain degree. You can't get rid of it yourself, but there is a way out and ***the only way is Christ.***

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh... [Because the flesh has the sinful nature. The flesh gives in to temptation. The flesh gives in to lust.] ...God... [God has to intervene.] ...having sent His

own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, **and for sin, condemned sin the flesh.**" That's why, as we're going to see, there has to be

- repentance
- baptism
- laws of God
- Spirit of God

—all involved in correcting the problem of the inherited sin within.

(go to the next track)

In going through this, I'm sure you're going to have some questions in your minds, but it shows exactly what human beings really are. Let's see what the Apostle Paul said. Let's come back here to Romans 7:14: "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal... [We're going to look at the carnal way of man without the Spirit of God in just a bit.] ...having been sold *as a slave* under sin; because what I am working out myself... [That is in my own life, where I'm going, what I'm doing.] ...I do not know.... [That is, without God's purpose. Isn't that the way it is with all human beings? Where are you going? What's your life? What's your purpose? They may have a secondary goal or something. They may have some things that they're doing, but where they're really going they don't know.] ...For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do" (vs 14-15). Isn't that the way that people do? Look at the thing when people sin and it's exposed, they virtually say the same thing. 'I was driven to do it,' or 'I was obsessed in it,' or 'I just got in the grips of it, I was possessed.' All of those things.

Verse 16: "But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.... [Whether you're converted or not. Because sin shows you how bad it is, and when you understand how bad it is that means you're agreeing with the law.] ...So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me" (vs 16-17)—***the sin within!*** The sinful nature is what human beings in rejecting God cannot understand how to get rid of or control. The answer is—***they can't without doing it God's way through Christ.***

They can do things to a certain degree. You can have self-help courses, you can change habits, and you can do this, and you can do that, you can make yourself better, and smarter, and stronger. You can discipline yourself and lose weight. You can build muscles. Women can make themselves more beautiful, and all of this sort of thing. But how far does it go? *It's all limited, and you come to the thing that sin within always rears its ugly head.*

So here's his conclusion, of and by himself, which is likewise for all human beings: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good....

[Because whatever good may be there, it's not dwelling in you to make you do good, you must learn good.] ...For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find.... [There's no internal resource on your own to really control the evil. That's why you need the Spirit of God.] ...For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me*" (vs 18-20). There we have it twice. That's the nature of human beings. They have desire to do good, so they have part of them with the nature of good, but sin is always there and they have what is called a *carnal mind*. Now we're going to look at the characteristics of a carnal mind.

Romans 8:6: "For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace, because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God.... [an enemy of God] ...for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*" (vs 6-7).

- You've got the sin within
- You have death within
- and now you have a carnal mind that is working against you
- How does that manifest itself?
- What are the primary things about the carnal mind that cause it to lie to itself?
- Have you ever lied to yourself?
- Most of us do an awful lot—don't we?

Whenever we do something we know we ought not do, we always justify it and lie to ourselves, 'Well, you know this,' or 'you know that.'

Let's look at the conundrum of the carnal mind. Let's come to Jeremiah 17 and let's look at what Jeremiah says, and then we'll look at some Proverbs as well. There's actually quite a bit in the book of Jeremiah concerning the carnal mind and rejection of God. Of course, you also have this, and this is also a conundrum in human nature and the human mind, which is: You can—with training, with discipline—you can make yourself better to a degree; you can have less sin in your life to a degree, but you can't get rid of it. And here's why, because the mind of sin, with the law of sin and the law of death, produces this:

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" A lot of people who have been reared in good homes and taught good things—were what? *Teaching things concerning God*. A lot of them really don't believe that they are desperately wicked above all things. However, when the pressure comes on, what do people do? *They lie, they cheat, they steal, they commit murder, and they all justify themselves*—do they not? *Deceitful!* You can train

yourself in evil to become more evil, or you can train yourself to minimize the evil that's within to a certain degree even though you don't have the Spirit of God. As long as you keep the laws of God, there is a certain degree of control of it. We'll see that in a little bit here when we get back to the story of Cain. But let's see what happened here. Let's see what happens when a society sets a course that is evil and all are participating in one degree or another with it with their carnal minds.

Verse 1: "The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars." Affecting their religion, affecting their standing with God, affecting the very way that they think. So they give themselves over to evil. Now it's very easy to do.

Let's come back here to Mark 7, and let's see what Jesus said. The sin is within and only God can solve it. That is the whole purpose of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread—is it not? And the whole purpose of conversion and growing and changing and overcoming—is it not? *Yes, indeed!*

Jesus made it very clear. This is not restricted to old people, but all people, young and old. Mark 7:20: "And He said, 'That which springs forth from within a man, that defiles the man.... [***It is in, the sin within.***] ...For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts... [Isn't that the first thing that happens? Hatred, jealousy, lust, greed, *evil thoughts*. And then the biggest problem that happens, sex sins.] ...adulteries, fornications... [When you train a society into that, like it was with Sodom and Gomorrah and we're doing today. Look at the society that we have. They're obsessed with sex.] ...murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride foolishness; all these evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man'" (vs 20-23)—because it's in. That's part of the penalty that we inherit from Adam and Eve.

Now even with a deceitful nature, and even with all of these internal evils, though, you stop and think: Many of these evils occur in your mind and most people don't act them out, but some do. Let's see how man views himself. Let's come back to the book of Proverbs. Let's look at that. Let's see what God says about the human heart here in the book of Proverbs. Very interesting! How does he view what he's doing? How does he think about himself? How does he think about the way that he is living and doing what he is doing? There's a book out, *I'm OK, You're OK*. I'm okay with my sins, you're okay with your sins. You accept me okay with my sins. I accept you okay with your sins and that is not, 'Don't ask, don't tell.'

Proverbs 14:12: “There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death.” Why? *Because it is sin!* Seems right, natural, good. That’s how we need to do it. Yes, indeed! It’s great! It’s marvelous! How about that?

Proverbs 12:20—this agrees with Jer. 17:9: “Deceit *is* in the heart of those who imagine evil...” Isn’t that amazing? *Yes, indeed!* Let’s look at a couple more.

Proverbs 15:26: “The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD...” And what you can do, you can go through all the book of Proverbs and it will show you right from wrong, good from evil.

I think this is depicting someone that we see on television all the time, especially on the news, Proverbs 21:4: “A high look, a proud heart, *and* the plowing of the wicked *are* sin.” Because they’re just right in the way of sin, they’re living in it, giving themselves over to it.

Proverbs 16:5: “Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; *though joined hand in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*” We could think of this in relationship to what those in Congress have been asked to do in voting for the healthcare plan. *Yes, indeed!*

Let’s come back here to Jeremiah 10. Now here’s the start. This is the only way that you can begin to get a handle on the sin within and what to do about it and how to change and how not to give yourself over to sin, even though sinful thoughts come into your mind. Every human being has got to realize this: The way God has made us is that

- we need God
- we need His Spirit
- we need His laws
- we need His way

—because we are incomplete. We are inherently evil, wickedness is within, sin is within; therefore, here’s the conclusion we have to come to as the beginning of the way out.

Jeremiah 10:23: “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself... [Though he thinks so, as we have read.] ...it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.” He doesn’t have the ability to do, really, good, in pure goodness. The comment was made: when even you look at the patriarchs and even those that God used dramatically in the Old Testament—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and so forth—all had their own sins and problems they had to overcome, too.

Verse 24—so Jeremiah knew the solution. “O LORD, correct me... [We need the correction of

God, through the Word of God, through the Spirit of God.] ...but with judgment; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing.”

Now, you see, just like the message of Jeremiah to those in Judea, because they had given themselves over to sin, they had left the way of God and trained themselves in evil. Like it said, it was ‘written with a pen of iron and a point of diamond upon the tablets of their heart.’

Jeremiah 11:6: “Then the LORD said to me, ‘Declare all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, “Hear the words of this covenant, and do them, for I earnestly forewarned your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising early and warning persistently, saying, ‘Obey My voice.’.... [And isn’t that the message in the Garden of Eden? God said, ‘Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,’ Right? *Yes! but they didn’t obey the voice of God.* That’s the whole sum of what God wants us to do. This is why we have the Word of God.] ...Yet they did not obey nor bow down their ear [to listen] but walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart.... [Following the sin within. There are consequences for this. They didn’t repent. He gave them many chances to repent and we’re going to see one of the solutions is begins with repentance. There has to be repentance.] ...So will bring on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did not do them.”’ And the LORD said to me, ‘A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the people of Jerusalem’” (vs 6-9). A society gets to the point of conspiring against God, just like we are in today.

“‘They have turned back to the iniquity of their forefathers, who refused to hear My words. And they went after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.’ Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will bring evil on them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry to Me, I will not hear them’” (vs 10-11). So a society can reach that point.

Now we have that in what are called *the incorrigible wicked*—don’t we?—*the habitual criminal that must be put away for life*. It doesn’t stop them—does it? *No*, they get into prison and their evil can even grow and expand. Those who are in charge in the prisons really don’t run them; the prisoners run it. They have gangs—you don’t believe me, watch MSNBC, their series on jails. How many have seen that? Well, go on MSNBC and watch their series on jails and those who are incarcerated. They start from the ones who committed lesser crimes and go all the way up to those who’ve committed violent crimes. They’ve

interviewed those murderers. And one man said, ‘If you let me out of here, I’m going to kill.’ And he killed three people before. They have trained themselves in it. This is something! This is quite a thing!

Now let’s look at another aspect of sin: *Sin that appears to be good*. This is a sin that is very hard for people to understand and to recognize, because it is something good they want to do for God. This is where religion comes from. God tells us how we need to approach Him. We need to come to God God’s way. We need to come to God in repentance. We need to acknowledge our sins.

Now here’s the case—and a lot of people don’t understand this, Gen. 4—this is the story of Cain and Abel, but there’s another story concerning Cain in here that we need to learn, not just concerning the murder, but what he did that he thought was good. So let’s read it here.

Genesis 4:3: “It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.... [Now later are we told that the children of Israel had to bring the firstfruits to God? *Yes!* So this must not have been the firstfruits to God. This must have been something else. Are we told to bring the tithe of the fruit of the ground? *Yes!* This must not have been the tithe, this must have been something else.] ...And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering, but He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering” (vs 3-5). Now why would that be? The answer is this: *Abel did what God commanded. Cain did what he thought was right.*

The truth of the matter is, you only approach God according to the way that He says to approach Him. If God says, ‘Do this,’ you are to do it. Cain says, ‘Well, I won’t do that, God. But I’m going to do something else. I have a good heart and I’m going to bring you this offering.’ Well, it wasn’t according to what God commanded. Now notice, Cain couldn’t understand this. Just like a lot of so-called Sunday-keepers can’t understand why their Sunday is an abomination to God. ‘Well, we’re doing this for good, Lord.’ You can name all the other things that they have: Christmas, Easter, New Years, Halloween, and all of those other things. They get mad.

“And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell. And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen?’.... [Notice what God said. This is an important thing, because it goes back to choices, and it goes back to the sin of telling God what good you’re going to do for Him. Because you are doing it from the deceitful goodness of your heart, God must

accept it. *No!*] ...**If you do well, shall you not be accepted?**.... [And what is doing well? *Doing what God says.*] ...**But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door**” (vs 5-7).

Now there are two meanings to this. Where was the altar of God, where did they meet God? *At the east of Eden where the two cherubim were.* That’s why later in the temple, you have cherubim overshadowing the Ark of God, the presence of God. So it was at the door of the Garden of Eden where they were to meet God. And here God is talking directly with them—right? *Yes, indeed!* ‘Sin lies at the door.’ In other words, ‘what you brought was not according to what I have commanded.’

A lot of people want to do good for God their own way. You can see, ‘Oh, *I want* to do this. *I don’t think* that it’s wrong to eat unclean meats. *I don’t think* that it’s wrong to worship on Sunday.’ You haven’t asked God what is right. ‘Well, *I think* I’ll bring this offering to God.’ If it’s not what God says, then it’s not right.

Now notice, you have a chance to change—right? You can choose to do well. You’ll be accepted, is that not true? *Yes!* “‘But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. Its desire *is* for you, but you must rule over it!’” (v 7). In other words, you have to overcome sin. You do not have to choose to sin, especially in approaching God. So what was Cain doing here? *Same thing that Adam and Eve did—right? Deciding what is good and evil.* Yes! You must rule over it.

Can unconverted people in the world, by choice, stop sinning if they make the choice to do so even though they have a nature that is of death and sin within? *Yes, they can!* Can a liar choose to tell the truth? *Absolutely!* He knows what the lie is. *Yes, indeed!* Can a thief choose to quit stealing? *Yes, indeed, he can!* That’s called ruling over it.

Now here’s the next thing that happens, which is this: if you don’t, then the sin within grows, just like the whole story of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. ‘A little leaven leavens the whole lump.’ And then you become exceedingly sinful. And did that not happen with Cain? *Yes!* Cain hated his brother, because God had respect to his offering and not to Cain’s. So he was jealous!

Then they were talking together, v 8: “And it came to pass that when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.” You know the rest of the story. Just like Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden of Eden. They could only come to the east entrance to meet with God. Cain was exiled to the land of Nod, or wandering, away from the presence of God. So when you deliberately sin and sin more and increase the

evil, you are pushed further and further away from God.

The question is: Any idea on the timeline when this happened? The only thing we have concerning a timeline here comes from *Josephus* where he says the tradition was that they were 135-years-old at that time. People say, ‘Well, where did Cain get his wife?’ In the beginning God put within Adam and Eve the various races and different people, and caused them to be conceived and born so that they could marry their own kind. Later on, they were not to marry their brothers and sisters and so forth.

Now what happens when the whole society over a number of years gives itself to evil and does not understand that it is *the sin within* that is the problem? Society cannot control it. Just look at any society. Even the societies that have given themselves over to evil, just like Solomon said, ‘In the place of judgment, I saw wickedness.’ You have

- corrupt police
- corrupt prosecutors
- corrupt attorneys
- corrupt government leaders
- corrupt people in the world
- corrupt bankers
- corrupt businessmen

—because they’ve given themselves over to evil. When that happens, God’s judgment is going to come.

Let’s come to Genesis 6:5; let’s see what happens when the whole society gives itself over to lawlessness. Remember the words of Jesus, ‘As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.’ Keep that in mind.

Genesis 6:5: “And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth... [God knows what’s going on in the whole world all the time. Now notice, after they had given themselves over to the sin within, here’s what happens.] ...and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil **continually**.... [Everything he did was sin. Stop and think about it. How much real true good do you find in the world today? *Very, very little*. It got so bad!] ...And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.’ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (vs 5-8).

Now we’re reaching that same point. Remember the one Who is called *the Lord* is was the one Who became Jesus Christ. But what do we find

here in the Old Testament. A lot of people say, ‘There’s grace in the New Testament, but that Old Testament was law.’ So here’s ‘grace in the eyes of the Lord.’

“These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man... [What is righteousness mean? This goes back to what we read in Rom. 5. Righteousness means *you keep the law*—right? *Yes, indeed!* He was righteous] ...and perfect in his generations, for Noah walked with God” (v 9). And you can’t walk with God unless you are in agreement with Him.

Verse 11 talks about his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: “Now the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt—for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth” (vs 11-12). Sounds pretty much like what we see around us today—right? *Yes, indeed!* All the terrible things that are going on. It just seems to be kind of like a flood or an avalanche, almost like the earthquake down in Chile. They had an 8.8 earthquake, and then they had another 8.8 earthquake. That earthquake went on for three and a half minutes! They’re not going to recover from this for a decade.

What do you think that God is going to do? Verse 12: “And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt—for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.” All flesh, everyone. We’ll read a little later where it talks about that there is ‘none that does good.’ Because once the society gives itself over to the sin within and continually follows that, there is the downward spiral of the increase of sin and wickedness and crime and depravity. And everything that man does in the imagination of his heart turns out evil, even though they intend to do good.

Just to give you an everyday example that you see all the time on your television set. You’ve seen all of these ads for different medicines to take. ‘Oh, this is good for you. Everybody’s happy doing it. But you know, it may cause convulsions. It may cause blindness. And in some rare cases may even cause death, but this is really good for you and you really need it, and all who take it are happy.’ Except those who died because of it! Even the good! ‘Oh, we’re going to solve this problem in government.’ *It fails*. ‘Oh, we’re going to help raise the revenue by taxing.’ And people move out of the state. So who are you going to tax? ***Everything is upside down and backwards and incurable!*** That’s why Christ has to return.

Let’s come here to v 13 and then we’ll read one more section here in Genesis. “And God said to Noah, ‘The end of all flesh has come before Me, for

the earth is filled with violence through them. And behold, I will destroy them *with* the earth.” After it was all over, and all done, and they came out on the other side of the Flood, notice something important. ***Human nature had not changed***, because God knew what they were going to do, but God gave a promise. Let’s pick it up here concerning the offering that Noah made. Genesis 8:21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in His heart, ‘I will not again curse the ground for man’s sake... [as He did before the Flood] ...although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth...’” *The sin within!*

This is what the world and men separated from God have never been able to figure out what to do with it, how to handle it, nor can they get rid of it. And He gave this promise: “...I will not again smite every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (vs 21-23). So that tells you that there were some pretty violent things going on before Flood because of the sins of men.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 1:31
- 2) Genesis 2:16-17
- 3) Genesis 3:1-6
- 4) James 1:13-15
- 5) Genesis 3:6-19
- 6) Romans 5:12-14
- 7) Romans 7:23
- 8) Romans 8:1-3
- 9) Romans 7:14-20
- 10) Romans 8:6-7
- 11) Jeremiah 17: 9, 1
- 12) Mark 7:20-23
- 13) Proverbs 14:12
- 14) Proverbs 12:20
- 15) Proverbs 15:26
- 16) Proverbs 21:4
- 17) Proverbs 16:5
- 18) Jeremiah 10:23-24
- 19) Jeremiah 11:6-11
- 20) Genesis 4:3-8
- 21) Genesis 6:5-9, 11-13
- 22) Genesis 8:21-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12
- Genesis 1:2
- Romans 5

Also referenced: Books:

I’m Ok, You’re Ok by Thomas A. Harris

Josephus

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