

NAOMI, THE DOCTRINE OF THE FALL

“Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled that there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem Judah went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife, Naomi...Then Elimelech, Naomi’s husband died: and she was left, and her two sons.” Ruth 1:1-3

The third great doctrine of the Bible is the doctrine of the Fall, and its consequence, human depravity. The God that *is*, is the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is King, absolute ruler of all. The man whom God made is made in His own image. The image of the invisible God is not his outer body, but the inner man, the human spirit, the dwelling place of God Who is Spirit. The Holy Spirit fills and dominates the human spirit, so that the soul of man, his mind, his emotions and his will are ordered by the mind, affections, and will of God. This, in turn, assures that the man will think God’s thoughts, love what God loves, and hate what God hates. He will do, act, perform, and live *godly* in his outer body. This man will be the very image and likeness of God...a godly man!

Adam, the man whom God made in His image, was forbidden to eat the fruit of the Tree in the midst of the garden. He was told that the day he ate of that tree he would die. But Adam, believed the devil’s lie instead of the truth of God, rebelled against the King, and died, *that very day*. Adam, of course, did not die physically that day. He lived to be 930 years old, but he died spiritually the day he sinned. This is the death that befell Adam when he sinned, and the cause of both spiritual and physical death which, passing on to his descendants, results in the Bible doctrine of human depravity.

When Adam sinned, disobeyed God, the dynamic of His spiritual godly life, the Holy Spirit, left his human spirit, which is the power center of the inner man. The human spirit alone is impotent to exercise dominion over the outer man, the flesh. In the words of our Lord, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak”. Paul demonstrates this futile struggle in the 7th chapter of Romans. A person may desire to be free from sin, from the tyranny of evil, but he is utterly unable to do so because of “sin in his members” the outer body, which simply wants to satisfy the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life.

The man portrayed in Rom. 7:14-23 is not the man God made in His image. This cryptic passage is not as many claim, a man in a high state of grace. No man in a high state of grace so sees himself as “carnal, sold under sin” for the very next chapter tells us to be carnally minded is enmity toward God, and is death. Nor does this passage mirror an unawakened sinner. Sinners do not delight in the law of God, after the inward man. They, rather, delight in fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, after the outer man. This is a man who has indeed fallen under the rule of his outer flesh, and is more the image of a beast than he is of a Holy God. (Jude 16-19). But this sinner has now been awakened; he has been regenerated by the sovereign Spirit of the living God so that he can no longer bear to live after the lust of the flesh. In fact he declares that since he no longer desires to do the evil that he is doing that it is not him (the real inner man) that is doing it, but sin that dwells in his fleshy body. Nor does Paul leave us with the impression that we are to be left defeated by this bully of flesh. He answers the question, “Who shall deliver me from this fleshy body of sin?” with “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

Naomi’s name means “pleasant”, that which is appealing and desirable to the flesh. The man whom God made in His image after His likeness looked at the forbidden fruit, saw that it looked good, tasted good, was pleasant and desirable to the flesh, he took of it and ate it. When he did, the Spirit of God left his human spirit, emptying his soul of the life of God. The light of life went out, his soul fell into deep darkness and, while professing himself to be wise, falling into darkness, he became a fool. The doctrine of man is “My God is King”. But when God is no longer King, man is no longer true man. He is simply an advanced species of animal with a bigger brain which allows him to be worse than brute beasts. That is the Bible doctrine of the Fall, and true Biblical depravity.

If we would no longer be a slave to sin, be a man, not as a brute beast, ruled by irresistible fleshy lusts, we will need more than will power and fleshy resolve. We must have nothing less than God Himself, by the Holy Spirit living and reigning in our human spirits. It takes God to be a man.

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