

## Exegetical Notes - Romans 5:12-21

### **“GRACE”**

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen, Pastor, Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kylies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

[charleshjensen@aol.com](mailto:charleshjensen@aol.com)

## **Romans 5:12-21**

### **Verse 12**

***Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—***

- In these following verses Paul compares Adam to Christ. Sin and death entered the world through Adam’s failure to obey God. Prior to Adam’s sin, there was no death and the world was in perfect balance/harmony with itself.
- But once sin had been introduced into the world everything was different. The balance/harmony of the world was replaced by aggression, and death became a reality as the consequence of sin.
- People became enslaved to sin and were powerless over it. Since Adam, all have sinned and fallen short.

(Notice the “dash” at the end of verse 12. Verses 13-17 are a parenthetical remark which breaks Paul’s train of thought. In the following verses, he discusses the pre-existence of evil.)

### **Verses 13-14**

***To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone’s account where there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.***

- The fact that Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden and eventually died is proof that “sin was in the world before the Law was given.”
- Though sin was “in the world” and the consequence of sin, “death,” was proof of its having invaded the world, no moral judgment was made about anyone’s guilt under the Law until the Law was given to Moses. You cannot

hold someone accountable to a law that has not been given. Still, death reigned before the Law was given proving that all had sinned and fallen short.

- Adam had been given a specific command from God (see Genesis 2:16-17) which he willfully broke. He is the pattern or model for all of us who, after the Law was given, deliberately break the commands of God.

### **Verses 15-17**

***<sup>15</sup> But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! <sup>16</sup> Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. <sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!***

- The “gift” is God’s grace through which we are saved. It is not like the “trespass,” Adam’s sin. Many people died because Adam’s trespass/sin (willfully disobeying God’s command) gave sin reign in this world. The “gift” (God’s blessing of life through Jesus’ death) set people free from the consequence of sin. The trespass brought death. The gift of God is life. So, the trespass and the gift are NOT alike. The first brings death and the latter brings life.
- Death reigned because one sin gave it entrance into the world. However, after there had been MANY trespasses, one act brought redemption to all who believe. In this, too, the gift is greater than the trespass and different from it.

(In verse 18, Paul returns to the thought of verse 12)

### **Verses 18-21**

***<sup>18</sup> Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.***

***<sup>20</sup> The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

- “Consequently,” ... because Adam’s trespass released the power of sin and destroyed the balance/harmony of the created order, “one righteous act,” “the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ,” brings life to all who trust Jesus to save them.
- The Law defines the nature of rebellion more specifically. But the fuller definition of rebellion simply magnifies the nature of the gift of God. God’s gift covers all transgressions. Now God grace reigns, bringing life not death.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *GRACE*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Interim Senior/Lead Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by *Cornerstone Fellowship* & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)