

BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY



The Biblical Doctrine about Man

**The Origin of Man:
Creation or Evolution?**

His Nature

His Fall

His Sin

The Consequences of the Fall and Sin

by

Roland Kleger

Kreuzlingen, May 2022

**Copyright © Roland Kleger, Doctor of Theology
CH-8280 Kreuzlingen (Switzerland)**

BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The Biblical Doctrine about Man

by

Roland Kleger

Translated by Heinz Lettner

*“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him;
male and female created he them” (Gen 1:27)*

*“Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was the condemnation of all men, so also the
result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men” (Rom 5:18)*

Introduction

This brochure is partly based¹ on lecture notes on dogmatic by Heinz Weber,² a former lecturer of Systematic Theology at the Bible-School Brake (Germany).

The word ***Anthropology*** denotes the ***doctrine of Man***.

The Greek word *ἄνθρωπος* (***anthrōpos***) means *man*, while *λόγος* (***lógos***) may be translated *doctrine* in this context.³ ***Anthropology*** then means the ***doctrine of man***.

From a theological viewpoint, we think of the relationship between God and man, in a scientific sense it relates to the organism of man.

¹ Especially passages in the 2nd and 5th chapter.

² Heinz Weber was not only a teacher but also a spiritual father to me.

³ It may also have the meaning of *Word* (comp. Joh 1 and Rev 19:13, where Jesus, the Son of God, is called *Logos*), *assertion*, *speech*, *Basis*, *written word*, etc.

When studying the theme of Anthropology, it is in our estimation crucially significant to base this study on the entire of Holy Scripture.

The question “*what is man?*” has preoccupied mankind of all ages. Since antiquity, philosophers and scholars have tried to find answers to this question. Man was (and still is) analysed down to the smallest possible detail but until today his own deepest secret has not really been discovered. Science is still trying to reconstruct the history and development of man but has up to now not reached any reliable results. Much of what has been claimed is ultimately only speculation – hypotheses without proof. We believe that the Bible can supply us with answers to the following often posed questions:

“*What is man?*”

“*Where does he come from?*”

“*Where is he going?*”

“*What is his significance?*”

“*What will be his goal and end?*”

The Bible claims to answer these questions.

Isa 40:6-8 *What shall I cry? All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. . . . The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever.*

We live in extremely anthropocentric times.⁴ The Bible reveals to us the transient character of men:

Job 14:1-2 *Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He springs up like a flower and withers away; like a fleeting shadow he does not endure...*

Psa 8:4-9 *...what is man that you are mindful of him*

Psa 144:3-4 *O LORD, what is man that you care for him?*

Jam 4:14 *...why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.*

At the beginning of creation, it was not so with man, because originally he was appointed to have eternal life. Only through his fall – through sin – he became transient and mortal (cf. Gen 2:16-17 and Gen 3).

Since his fall into sin ‘natural’ man does not even know his real position before God. He does not know any genuine fear of God nor recognise God’s lordship. (cf. Psa 14; 53; Pro 1:7; 1Co 2:14). **So man lives far away from his true destiny**, which is eternal life (cf. Joh 17:3).⁵ Since the fall, man lives disorientated. He creates his own religion. The Bible reveals to us the character of the religion of ‘natural man’:

Ecc 2:1-11.15-23
3:1-11.16-22
5:9-17
6:7-12

⁴ I.e., where man stands in the centre... or rather, where man thinks to be the centre of everything!

⁵ Concerning man without God and man in fellowship with God, compare Psa 49 and 90.

7:15-18

- 5 The religion of natural man⁶ often leads to a certain pessimism of life. With believers this is (normally) not the case, since they should be prepared for death. This is also a reason why especially young people are asking the question about the real meaning of life. If man looks for answers at the wrong address, he all too often ends in resignation, revolt or escape into a narcotic society, which cannot endure the reality of life: escaping into alcohol, drugs, in *free sex*, or other pleasures: in short, into an epicurean or hedonistic lifestyle.
- 10 This same man is confronted by a God of love, who seeks his lost creature. God does not want to leave his creatures astray and lost. His love urges him to come near to man, his own creature:

Gen 3:9**Exo 3:7-8**

- 15 **Jer 3:1.12-14.22-23; 7:22-28**

Eze 18:23.31-32**Mat 9:36****Luk 15:4-7; 19:10.41-42****Rev 22:17**

- 20 Man realises the very reason of his own existence only when he acknowledges his Creator (Joh 17:3). God has created man unto life: man without the knowledge of God is not wholly alive, he only vegetates... like an animal. It is quite fitting, when in some French translations *ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος* ([*psuchikos anthrōpos*]: a natural [i.e. earthly minded] man) in 1Co 2:14 is translated as
- 25 **“*homme animal*”** [*animalish man*].

An illustration:

- 30 Each apparatus or instrument is made for a particular use. When sold, it is accompanied with an instruction manual. The device may be damaged or destroyed when the instructions are improperly followed. It is the same with man! God has created man for a particular reason (fellowship with himself) and has also given him an instruction manual – his Word.

⁶ I.e., man who lives without God, who has not been renewed by the Spirit of God.

I. THE ORIGIN OF MAN

God's decree of creation is "*the mystery of his will*" (Eph 1:9). We shall never be able to totally comprehend the "*why?*" of creation. It is a mystery hidden in the very being of God. At the same time, the Holy Scripture gives an answer to the question of the "*the what for?*" of creation.

Rom 11:36 *For of him, and through him and to him, are all things.*

Col 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth.*

Creation is a *glorification* of God himself! The claim that God could not live without his creation is not valid, since God already existed before he created the universe. But we cannot know or discern what God had been doing before our creation. The triune and eternal God, who has neither a beginning of days nor an end of life... what could he have been doing prior to creating us? Could he, in his eternal existence – all alone – possibly have been lonely? Or were there other worlds and creatures before us? We do not know. The Bible gives us no answers to these questions of curiosity. The day will come, when all our questions will be answered... or – maybe one should better say – on that day all such questions will probably not bother us anymore. We speak of the day, when we shall see him face to face (cf. 1Co 13:12; 1Jo 3:2; Rev 22:3-5).

The purpose of the Bible is not to satisfy our curiosity. The Word of God is practical, a book with information and guidance for our lives: Where do we come from? Why and for what reason are we here? Why are we as we are and not different? Where does evil come from? How can we escape evil and its consequences?

But there are also questions which are not answered:

- Why is salvation destined only for man and not (also) for fallen angels? (Heb 2:16; cf. Mat 25:41)
- What will happen to the animals in the world to come? Will I meet my beloved dog or parrot in an after world? (cf. Ecc 3:20-21)
- Will we all recognise each other again?
- Will we in the world to come be thinking of people who will not be saved?
- What will we be doing in a "never ending eternity"? Will we still be playing football?

The Bible is a manual for our life. In it, God gives us information and instructions which we need for a life according to his will. The Bible is enough to allow us to live in accordance with his will. What is not written there is not essential for our life.

It is important to know that it is God who has created us, to know his will for our life, also to know that all are sinners since the fall of Adam and Eve and to know that God still loves us and has promised the Saviour (cf. *proto-gospel* in Gen 3:15). This promise has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, his Son. Everyone who believes in him and accepts him as Saviour and Lord receives eternal life. The Bible answers all these essential questions. If it does not tell us what God was doing before our creation, then God did not think it necessary to explain it to us, and if he does not tell us in detail what we shall be doing in eternity..., maybe it is meant to be a surprise for us. He has limited himself to reveal to us that our future state will be glorious, awesome... this is all... and this is enough... or don't you think so?

Rather than being concerned with things which God chose to keep hidden, we should aim to agree with those matters which he has revealed and commanded.

A. Different theories or hypotheses concerning the origin of man

1. The **pantheistic**⁷ theory: This concept identifies God with the universe or vice versa; saying that the universe and God are identical. In antiquity, this concept was largely held among the Greeks. It has adherents to this day. It is a pagan world view and stands in contradiction to the statements of the Word of God. The Bible reveals a personal Creator, who is differentiated from his creation. He is before everything that is created, he (the triune God), who alone is not created: cf. Joh 1:1-9; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:2-3. God must not be confused with creation or the universe. Christ, according to Heb 1:2-3, has not only created the universe, he is also the one who upholds and keeps it.

2. The **materialistic** hypothesis: Matter and the universe have always existed – without God. This is atheism which claims an **eternal materialism**. This worldview has its adherents for instance among Marxists or Communists. Marxism is a materialistic philosophy. We consider it as an illusionary and utopian philosophy.

3. The **atheistic** hypothesis of the **big bang**: This hypothesis also denies the existence of God (as in position 2) but claims that the universe began with an **initial explosion** billions of years ago. Out of this explosion came protoplasm, a first cell of primitive life out of which in turn everything developed by itself – without God.⁸ According to this hypothesis, man is the result of a long development starting with a primitive cell: through different stages (among those that of the ape) until that of modern “civilised” (?) man. One speaks of an evolution from *simple to complex*. This concept denies a personal God in the same way as materialism and pantheism.

4. The **deistic** hypothesis (**deism**): This concept (known advocates: Voltaire and Lessing) speaks of a lofty and sublime but distant God. God created the beginnings, the material universe and primitive life (i.e. protoplasm; cf. position 3) which he then left to itself. Nature then developed according to its innate (inherent) laws by itself to its present state. This hypothesis as the one before (the *big bang*) demands long periods of millions or billions of years for the “creation” of the universe and of man.⁹

5. The **“day-periods”** hypothesis: This position contradicts the atheistic (Darwinism) as well as the deistic (Deism) evolutionary theory as it insists that God created all species according to their kind (repeatedly expressed in Gen 1). Man accordingly is created as a special species; he is therefore no (more developed) descendant of the ape. This position meets Deism and Darwinism insofar as the 6 days of creation are not understood as days of 24 hours but as epochs (of thousands or millions of years). This position is principally an effort to harmonize the Bible and so-called modern science, which assumes a high age of the earth.¹⁰ It is important to notice that the adherents of this position also assume that God created man according to his kind, male and female. They assume as the

⁷ **Pantheism**: from Greek *παν θεός*; *pan* = everything; *theós* = God. Therefore: *pan theos [estin]* = “everything [is] God” or *pan en theō [estin]* = “everything [is] in God” or similar *theós en pantí [estin]* = “God [is] in all”.

⁸ Arguments against this hypothesis (also called *Theory of Evolution*) see below. It is also called **Darwinism** (after Charles Darwin, the author of the book *Origin of Species*).

⁹ See below our arguments against the evolution-theory. This hypothesis is prominently one of liberal theology, which denies a “verbal inspiration” (i.e. the *inspiratio plena*) of Holy Scripture.

¹⁰ One speaks of 4 to 20 billion years. Strongly divergent suggestions in the matter point to their speculative character.

proponents of the following positions do, the historicity of Adam and Eve.¹¹ Even though we ourselves tend to one of the following positions (i.e. six 24-hour-days), we welcome the fact that scholars like Blocher, Schaeffer and Archer resist the claim of many critics according to whom several records in Gen 1–11 are supposedly influenced by Babylonian mythology.¹² We believe that God has revealed these things to Moses or even to the Patriarchs before him, saying we are convinced of the historical character of Gen 1–11. Advocates of this position justify their interpretation of the six days among other things with the poetical style of the creation-record. The six days and the expression *evening and morning* imply in their assumption not 24-hour-days but could refer as well to longer periods.

6. The *Days of Revelation* hypothesis: The 6 days of creation are interpreted as days of revelation in which God revealed to Moses (so to speak in phases) the origin of the universe and of man. The six days are understood as days of revelation and not as days of creation: On the 1st day God revealed to Moses that he created the universe, space and time and that the earth was without life at that time. On the 2nd day he would have revealed to Moses that he created light and on the 3rd day plants and trees and so forth. In other words, in Genesis 1, Moses tells us what God revealed to him during six days. This hypothesis has the advantage that one can circumvent the delicate discussion concerning the duration of creation. The Sabbath law in Exo 20:11 nevertheless shows the fragility of this interpretation: As God created the universe in 6 days, so man should work for 6 days and rest on the 7th day, as also God rested after creation. If – as this hypothesis claims – the six days in Genesis 1 are days of revelation, what then is the 7th day, the day of rest which contrasts with the 6 days of work? Should it mean that while God did “revelation work” on six days, he then rested on the 7th day from his revelation?

7. The *Restitution Theory*:¹³ First God should have created heaven and earth (Gen 1:1), and also the angels. Some of the angels then are supposed to have rebelled, after which God cast the sinful angels unto the earth. The fall of Satan and his angels then caused the destruction of the earth, i.e. the chaos. The Hebrew term *תהו ובהו* (*tohū wābohū*) in Gen 1:2 refers to this “catastrophe”. From Gen 1:3 onward, it is told that God restored the earth and how he did it (restitution¹⁴). Contrary to this hypothesis, there are essentially the following two arguments:

a.) In Gen 1:31, it says that God saw all that he had created and behold [*it was*] *very good*. Why should Gen 1:2 (at the beginning of creation) already speak of destruction when it positively says that at and with the 6th day of creation everything was very good?¹⁵

b.) This hypothesis seems to contradict the Pauline doctrine of sin: According to Paul, sin and death (and with it destruction) came through (and after) the sin of Adam into the world. The theory of restitution on the contrary suggests destruction and death already before the fall of man.¹⁶

¹¹ Three prominent advocates of the *day-period-theory* are Henri Blocher, *Révélation des origines*, 2^{ème} éd., Lausanne: Presses Bibliques Universitaires, 1988; Francis Schaeffer, *La Genèse, le berceau de l'histoire*, Genève: La Maison de la Bible (an evangelical commentary of the first eleven chapters of Genesis); G. L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 3rd ed., Chicago: Moody Press, 1994, pp. 196ff.

¹² See e. g. the epics *Enuma Elish* and *Gilgamesh*. Claus Westermann and Hermann Gunkel are two prominent scholars who insist vehemently on the influence of Babylonian mythology.

¹³ One speaks of a *gap-theory* (see Richard Wiskin, *Die Bibel und das Alter der Erde*, 3rd ed. Neuhausen Stuttgart: Wort und Wissen, Hänssler-Verlag, 1999), pp. 18-23 and Don Batten (editor), Ken Ham, Jonathan Sarfati and Carl Wieland, *The updated & Expanded Answers Book* (Acacia Ridge, Queensland, Australia: Answers in Genesis Ltd., 1999), pp. 45-62.

¹⁴ From Latin *restitutio* (restitution) or *restituo* (to restore, to put into its old place). It needs to be mentioned that within this hypothesis there are different opinions to details.

¹⁵ Contrary to this argument, representatives of the restitution-theory say that Gen 1:31 only expresses that the creation after the restitution (Gen 1:3) was very good. Contrary to this explanation again speaks the fact that Satan and his angels were not restored as they are rebellious unto this day. One would have to read into Gen 1:31: “...and everything was very good, except the angels who had rebelled against God...”

¹⁶ Compare the arguments of Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Welwyn, Herts.: Evangelical Press, 1976, pp. 46-48, against the *Gap-Theory*. p. 47 says: “The gap theory is not only impossible scientifically but also destructive

8. The *Interval-Theory*: According to this theory, when God created heaven and earth, the earth was formless and empty (Gen 1:1-2), i.e. without life (only water, sand and stones). This state of formlessness could have lasted millions or even billions of years. Only after this long period God created in 24-hour-days what is described following Gen 1:3. In other words: between Gen 1:2 and Gen 1:3, there needs to be a *time-interval* (compare with the mentioned *gap-theory*). In contrast to the restitution-theory, the interval-theory does not imply destruction before the fall of Adam. Other than the “day-period-hypothesis” (Position 5), the interval-theory takes into consideration the normal meaning of the expression *evening* and *morning*. It allows an old age of the earth but contradicts the “time-table” of official science in relation to the age of plants, animals and man, as it assumes six 24-hour-days for the act of creation as recorded in Gen 1:3ff. The question remains open, whether the fact that in the Hebrew text the verses Gen 1:2 and 1:3 (as also all other verses between Gen 1:1 and Gen 2:3) are connected with a “*waw*”, speaks against an interval between Gen 1:2 and Gen 1:3 and the event described there.

9. *Creationism*: The earth is not old. The creationists defend the scientific probability of a *young earth*. Indeed, 90 % of the dating-methods point to an age between 10'000 and 100'000 years for the earth and thus as well for all living beings. The remaining 10 % are dating-methods based on the radioactivity of elements as for example the C¹⁴, uranium or potassium. Their parameters are so extremely unreliable that the scientists rarely make use of it. If one sends a sample to a laboratory for a radiometric analysis, they will first give you a form where you have to fill in the desired approximate age of the sample, so that the results may approach it as close as possible. The errors go from 2 million to 3 billion years for a volcanic rock which is less than 100 years old.¹⁷ For the creationists, the 6 days of creation are thus understood as 24-hour-days and the earth is assumed to be 10'000 to 20'000 years old. The creationist Henry M. Morris¹⁸ pleads for not more than 10'000 years, while Thiessen and other creationists prefer 10'000 to 20'000 years. The genealogies in Gen 5 and 10–11 would then not be totally complete; they would contain gaps, which would not be a problem for the question of inspiration.¹⁹ In other passages of the Bible there are also omissions of generations. In Semitic culture it is normal for instance to call your grandchild also your son. We would like to point out that the most recent results of astronomy and astrophysics call more and more into question the allegations of the so called “*official science*” which a priori insists on an old earth (several billion years). Recently scientists discovered that the space is not at all empty of matter. On the contrary, the space seems to be full of matter, substances... only of a different kind which we may not necessarily perceive. All methods of calculation applied until today are found to be doubtful and contestable.²⁰ We will come back to this point in the subchapter on the evolution-theory. The author of this brochure tends towards this position.

10. James Ussher²¹ analyses the genealogies of the Bible and calculates the year 4004 BC for creation. This hypothesis assumes completeness of the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11. Some scholars speculate with the following figures: 4000 years from creation to the first coming of Christ; another 2000 years until the second coming of Jesus and after that the 1000-year-kingdom of Christ: amounting to a total of 7000 years from creation to the commencement of eternity. According to this hypothesis, there are thus no gaps (omitted generations) in the genealogies in the book of

theologically. By accepting the geological age system, the Bible-scholar is thereby accepting the fossil record which identifies these ‘ages’.”

¹⁷ Compare Don Batten, op. cit., p. 72: “What date would you like? The forms issued by radioisotope laboratories for submission with samples to be dated commonly ask how old the sample is expected to be. Why? If the techniques were absolutely objective and reliable, such information should not be necessary. Presumably the laboratories know that anomalous dates are common, so they need some check on whether they have obtained a ‘good’ date.”

¹⁸ Compare Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, p. 45. Richard Wiskin, *Die Bibel und das Alter der Erde*, pp. 24ff, also tends into this direction.

¹⁹ Listing the patriarchs, Moses would have taken a representative choice of the most important names.

²⁰ Compare Don Batten, op. cit., 63-82.

²¹ 1581-1656, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland.

Genesis. But today – apart from a small minority – even the most conservative among evangelicals are convinced that this hypothesis is untenable, as history and archaeology, allegedly, provide many references to civilisations around 3000 BC or even before.²² And according to the book of Genesis, the flood (deluge) should be dated earlier than that, and consequently the creation of man still further back.

B. The creation account

We prefer not to speak of a *theory of creation*, but rather of a *creation account*. On the other hand, we speak of an *evolution theory* (the hypothesis of Darwin concerning the development of the different species).

The creation of man was preceded by a declaration of God:

Gen 1:26 *...let us make man...*

We were created according to a specific plan of God and according to his will:

Gen. 1:26 *...let us make man in our image*

Gen 1:27 *...so God created man in his own image*

Man has a *counterpart*, a *model* in heaven: Psa 139:14-16; Psa 33:9; Jer 1:5. Man is the result of a direct act of creation by God.

Gen 1:27 *...so God created man*

2:7 *...and the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) formed man*

Cf. Gen 5:1; Deu 4:32; Psa 100:3; Mat 19:4; 1Co 11:9.

Man is a miracle that has come forth from the hand of the creating God. Scripture speaks against all theories of indirect creation or even automatic evolution.

Gen 2:7 shows us how God created man. The breath out of the mouth of God gave life to man:

Job 33:4 *The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

This breath out of the mouth of God must not be equated with eternal life. Eternal life is divine life (cf. 2Pe 1:4). In Gen 2:7, it says that through the breath of Yahweh matter (dust from the earth) was animated to become a living soul; a personality.

Food for thought:

Salvation in Jesus Christ does not change fallen man back into the state he was in at the time of the earthly paradise (Eden), but rather gives man eternal, divine life (cf. 2Pe 1:4), which will enter into the new creation.

²² Others speak of 6000 or even 7000 BC. Compare Merrill F. Unger, *Ungers Grosses Bibelhandbuch*, translated from American (Asslar: Verlag Schulte + Gerth, 1987), pp. 14, 36-37. Relating to this, we would like to draw the attention to the fact that in recent times several scholars expressed their doubts about the conventional chronological table of ancient history. This is particularly the case with the Egyptian history and its dynasties. Recent archaeological discoveries seem to plead for a shorter chronology. See e. g. Thomas Schirmacher, 'Auf dem Weg zu einer biblischen Chronologie der Kulturgeschichte' in *Bibel und Gemeinde*, 4/91, pp. 390-427.

Man is distinguished from animal through the breath of God. Animals have no fellowship with God but in each man there is a consciousness of God (cf. Rom 1:21). This inner knowledge of the existence of God is called *intuition*. Man is not distinguished from animal by degree but by essence (his attributes, his character). In the chapter concerning the nature of man, we shall return to the theme of evolution and its theory.

The creation account gives insight into several important questions.

1. Creation in 6 days: 24-hour-days or “period-days”?

To adapt to so-called science many interpreters (also Evangelicals) construe the days of creation in Gen 1 as creation-periods. Among others the following two facts seem to motivate this interpretation:

1. The Darwinist evolution-theory demands long intervals of time.
2. The claim of modern science, apparently proving that the earth, i.e. the universe, is billions of years old.

a.) Arguments held for the period-days-hypothesis

Evangelical theologians who hold a *day-period-hypothesis* insist that this interpretation (literary, poetical) does not impinge on the inerrancy and inspiration of the Bible. There are many representatives of the authority and inerrancy of Holy Scripture who support the day-period-hypothesis. Here two of their arguments:

1. The Hebrew word “*yōm*” (יֹם) is not only used for a 24-hour-day but can also refer to a *period* or an *epoch* (comp. for instance: *day of salvation*, *day of judgement*...).
2. On the 6th day, God created the animals on the ground and also man (cf. Gen 1:24ff). According to the text, they were created on one and the same day: the animals of the field, man and woman. In Gen 2:18ff, Adam should have given names to all the animals, before he became conscious of being alone, i.e. without a partner. God then caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, took one of his ribs out of which he created Eve. Advocates of the day-period-hypothesis say it would have been impossible for all this to happen on one day. For the naming of animals alone, Adam would have needed months or even years. Creationists answer to this argument as follows: Adam probably only named the animals in his immediate environment and not all animals in an absolute sense, certainly not diving into the sea to give names to all animals there. Science discovers even today, animals they did not know before. It seems to have sufficed that Adam saw some pairs of animals to become conscious of his solitude. This argument does not seem to be compelling in our view.

b.) Arguments for a creation in six 24-hour-days

1. The expression *and there was evening and there was morning* speaks against an interpretation of periods. As mentioned, it is a fact that the Hebrew word *yōm* can mean something other than a day of 24 hours (e.g. *day of salvation*). Compare also Gen 7:11 where it speaks of years, months and days in the usual meaning of the words concerned.
2. In **Gen 1:14-18**, it speaks of lights that divide day and night and determine seasons, days and years. What if these seasons should last for millions of years?
3. On the 3rd day plants, trees etc. were created (**Gen 1:9-13**). How should these have survived without the sun, which was only created on the 4th day if (as supporters of the *day-period-hypothesis* claim) these days of creation have to be understood as (long) periods? However, we

admit that for the photosynthesis the presence of the sun is not in all cases absolutely indispensable. The plants use the energy of the light (of different kinds of sources of light) for the photosynthesis. According to Gen 1, the light was present right from the beginning (i.e. since the first day of creation). – However, an earth without sun, during billions of years, would

4. The pollination of many plants is by insects. According to Gen 1, plants were already created on the 3rd day, but insects not before the 6th day. If the days of creation should be long periods, it remains unexplained how plants, dependent on insects, could survive their long absence. Against this argument the supporters of the day-period-hypothesis reply that the 6 days of creation (for them periods of creation) need not necessarily be understood chronologically time wise. The sequence of the six days is to be explained as poetical style. In view of the divine reason for the Sabbath law in Exo 20:11, this explanation is very questionable. Apropos Exo 20:11: If one alleges that certain fish were living on insects right from the beginning of the creation (which we doubt, because of Gen 1:30) and not only after the entry of sin and death into the world because of Adam's sin (cf. Rom 5:12; Gen 3), then the "day-period-hypothesis" is even more problematic because, according to Gen 1:20-23, the fish and birds were created on the 5th day, whereas the insects were obviously created only on the 6th day (see Gen 1:24-25). Therefore if one assumes that there was a gap of millions of years between the 5th and the 6th creation-day, then one would wonder on what those fishes (and birds) were living on in the meantime.
5. In the face of these weighty arguments, the advocates of the "day-period-hypothesis" are forced to affirm that the order of the six creation-days (for them of course 6 creation-periods) must not necessarily be interpreted as chronological but could be rather explained by the poetic style of the author. But we cannot accept this objection, otherwise the reason indicated by God for the Sabbath in Exo 20:11 would be incomprehensible. Therefore the following argument:
6. The model for the Sabbath law in Exo 20:11 would be absurd if the days of creation have to be understood as long periods.
7. After all, God only has to speak a word and it happens (cf. Psa 33:9; 147:14-18; Isa 48:13; 50:2; Heb 11:3); he does not need millions of years. It is to be observed that God created man as an adult being. The chicken existed before the egg and the trees were already bearing fruit when they were created. It did not take thousands or millions of years, until the first rays of light reached the earth. God created the stars in such a way that their rays reached the earth from the beginning.

We therefore tend rather towards the creationist position: a creation in six 24-hour-days.²³ To questions concerning the age of the earth we shall return in the chapter on evolution-theory. Let it already be mentioned here: the fact that creation by God cannot be proven, does in no way substantiate the theory of evolution. To believe its speculations takes at least as much "faith" as the belief in a creation by God.

2. A supernatural creation (*supernaturalism*)

First of all, a definition of what we mean by creation:

1. Living beings of today are descended from other living beings, which were all created after their kind.
2. Within certain species there can be changes (caused for instance through geographic-climatic influence, degeneration or breeding), which bring forth a variety of creatures within a certain

²³ For good and easy to understand arguments for the creationist interpretation of the days of creation, see Richard Wiskin, *Die Bibel und das Alter der Erde*, pp. 7ff. A good argumentation see also S. Külling, *Der Schöpfungsbericht und naturwissenschaftliche Fragen* (Reutlingen: Chr. Killinger, 1976) and Don Batten, op. cit., pp. 34-57.

species – without constituting a new species (no leap between species). One speaks of variability. The different colours of skin with man are to be explained along this line. The possibility of variability within a certain species would also explain how not only the human race, but also the whole animal world was saved in the ark.

5

The creation account teaches then a **supernatural creation**. The voice of unbelief wants to convince us that the first two chapters of Genesis do not want to tell us **how** God created the world, but (only) **that** he created it. If God had not intended to tell us how he created the world, why has he done so in such a detailed way? Finally the authority of the Word of God is at stake here.

10

Job 38:4 *Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.*

15

1. God created heaven, earth, the sea and all that is in them without the use of pre-existent matter – out of nothing (*ex nihilo*²⁴).

Rom 4:17 *the God . . . who calls things that are not as though they were...*

20

Heb 11:3 *...that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

God is of course also able to produce something out of matter, which he has first created: compare Gen 1:24: *...let the land produce...*

25

2. The Bible does not testify to a slow step-by-step-process, but rather to a creation that appeared suddenly (cf. Psa 33:9).

30

3. God created a completely developed universe. Creation bears the appearance of a certain age, i.e. God created trees that already bore fruit²⁵ (cf. Gen 1:12), adult men who never were babies (cf. Gen 1:27), stars whose rays already were shining on the earth, birds that never hatched from eggs, etc.²⁶

C. The theory of evolution

We thereby refer to the atheistic²⁷ (Darwinism) as well as the deistic²⁸ (Deism) theory of evolution. The deistic evolution-theory is a trial to harmonise between the Bible and “official science”.

²⁴ *Terminus technicus* in Latin, meaning: *out of nothing*. In the beginning God created out of nothing, which did not however preclude that God used matter which he had created to make or form more complex things: i.e. man taken from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7) or in Gen 1:20: “*let the water teem...*” or Gen 1:24: “*let the land produce...*” In a similar way, Jesus changed water into wine (cf. Joh 2). One could also say that Jesus created wine in that he said: “*Let the water bring forth wine...*”

²⁵ By the way: if God cannot create fruit trees that never have been seeds, he also cannot create seeds which do not stem from fruit trees.

²⁶ Evolutionists start from the principle that the universe is continuously expanding. Thus the parameters of the rays of light, moving at the speed of light (~300'000 km/second), would effectively take billions of years before reaching us. But the evolutionists do not have reliable scientific arguments to affirm (or prove) the expansion of the universe. What one can affirm is only that *the universe is constantly moving*. That's all! Some creationist physicians start from the principle of a “closed” universe (immensely big but “limited”). In this case (i.e. if the universe is limited, closed) the parameters concerning the speed at which the initial rays of the starlight should have reached us, that means the earth, would radically change. In that case one may again obtain an age between 10'000 and 100'000 years! Compare this with Don Batten, op. cit., pp. 83-90.

²⁷ This denies the existence and necessity of God (see above).

Unfortunately it is also often supported in evangelical circles. By evolution-theory we mean the “belief”, whereby all things and living creatures came into being and reached their present state without supernatural influence. Chaos became out of itself cosmos. Out of smallest particles there should have come planets, palm-trees, pelicans... and us humans... and all this without any help or intelligence outside of capacities inherent in matter and energy.²⁹

Since the last but one century, a number of scientists claim that there are certain scientific results which prove the unreliability of the creation account³⁰ in the first two chapters of Genesis. It is said, that evolution is scientific, whereas creation is a simplified, religious, unscientific belief. It needs to be mentioned in this context that not only in the USA, but also in other countries (also in Eastern states) there are thousands of scientists with creationist convictions.³¹

The question is: Is the Bible true, or the claims of the evolutionists? It is a fact that as a Christian one has to believe in creation as it is taught in the Bible. On the other hand, one must not forget that the evolution-theory is only based on hypotheses and speculations. Whether evolution is really scientific, has increasingly been questioned in recent times.

There are basically two reasons which motivate us to question the evolution-theory:

1. Because it contradicts the Word of God.
2. Because it rests only on hypotheses and speculations which remain unproven until this day. The evolution-theory would be better placed into the category of a philosophy than as natural science.

The evolution-theory by Charles Darwin (1809-1882) is based wholly on speculations. His hypothesis gives no answers to the question of the origin of life. Darwin himself said that the search for the origin of life would be a lost cause and hopeless. The speculative character of his thesis can be recognised in his writings by his frequent use of sentences like “*we may nevertheless assume that...*”; “*in all probability it is...*” etc.

The evolutionist puts a small piece of life at the beginning; he calls it **protoplasm**. Then he wants to convince us that everything we see in nature today has evolved out of this protoplasm.

The evolution-theory denies that man is the result of a special act of creation by God and places man on a similar level as the animals. It claims that evolution (i.e. the development of life) takes place by selection (**selection-theory**), saying that procreation is always dominated by the strongest or best developed individual, so that in this way there is a constant improvement (to an elevated degree).³²

²⁸ This speaks, as mentioned, of a lofty and distant God, who created the beginning of the universe, but then left it to itself so that it may develop further according to its inherent laws of nature. God has created a clock, so to speak, but now it runs on its own. In other words, God was the so-called *prima causa* of the universe, afterwards he only watched over the evolutionary process. One of the most famous advocates of deism was the French Jesuit Father and Palaeanthropologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955).

²⁹ Compare Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones: Powerful evidence against evolution*, 3rd printing (Acacia Ridge, Queensland, Australia: Answers in Genesis, 2005), p. 7.

³⁰ Many speak of two different creation accounts. We assume that Moses in Gen 1:1–2:3 narrated chronologically how God created the universe, whereas in Gen 2:4-25 he speaks in detail of the creation and purpose of man.

³¹ Carl Wieland, *Stones and bones*, 5-6.

³² Darwin’s “*natural selection*” is scientifically exact concerning the animal world only. Indeed, in the animal world the strongest win and it is the strongest male which mates the female. This explains how a certain elimination of the weak members in reproduction happens. The weak and the sick disappear and only occasionally can reproduce. What is scientifically wrong is the affirmation according to which through time additional positive characters would appear and be added to the DNA of the “lion” due to a great number of mutations. And these alleged mutations would result in a “super lion” and, oh wonder, these mutations would be even transmitted to the following generations! But in fact the natural selection causes only the slowing down of the degeneration (weakening) of the race, because the sick (e. g.

Furthermore, evolution-theory assumes spontaneous mutations³³ (*mutation-theory*). With this alleged mutation, they want to explain the gaps between the species (macro-evolution³⁴). The evolutionist contradicts the statements of the Bible which says that God created all beings “*after their kind*”. Darwin himself admits that if his theory is true, there should be very many fossilised intermediary pieces. Evolution-theory in fact demands millions of transitional forms. In order to explain the untenable character of Darwin’s assertions, Wieland mentions the famous example of the reptile and the bird:

If the forelimb of a reptile, for instance, has turned into the wing of a bird, why don’t we find a series of fossils showing these stages—part-limb, part-wing; or part-scale, part-feather—one gradually giving way to the next?³⁵

Indeed, the evolution-theory calls for millions of transitional forms (Wieland calls them “*in-between types*”³⁶). We are waiting until this day that these will be shown to us and then we may believe in evolution as well... Some evolutionists affirm there are some, while others deny this.³⁷

To the following questions evolution-theory can give until today no answers:

asthmatic “lions” no longer (or only rarely) procreate but are rather eaten by the strong and healthy “hyena”. Thus the natural selection prevents degeneration but it does **not** allow an evolution towards a higher level. By the way, natural selection is a pertinent argument of Darwin against his own camp! Indeed, a “mutating fish” which (allegedly), miraculously, should suddenly have received a forepaw would immediately be eradicated by all nearby (surrounding) predatory fish. Because with a paw, and especially with a paw which is not yet perfectly developed, the animal in question would be no longer at all adapted to its environment and therefore inevitably exterminated by the law of “the survival of the species” (natural selection) of Darwin!

³³ Mutation in Biology: genetically observed changes in plants or animals (so-called changes in the structure of the chromosomes).

³⁴ The mutation from one species to another (macroevolution) is an invention of the neo-Darwinian period. **Jacques Monod**, the author of the book “Le hasard et la nécessité” (the coincidence and the necessity) wrote: “The macroevolution exists but it is a miracle” (“Le saut évolutif existe, mais c’est un miracle!”). It has been soon discovered that the theory of Darwin cannot bear a critical examination. First of all, the astronomic number of intermediary (transition) fossils for proof of that theory has never been found. Secondly, the probability that the (allegedly) mutating fish would be devoured is so high, that the scientists in question thought of macroevolution! This theory, without any proof, starts from the principle that one day some species undergoes a macro-mutation and passes from the stage of a fish directly to the stage of a reptile. **But this needs a miracle, as Jacques Monod himself admitted.** The geological chronological table of Buffon “seems” to prove the veracity of this theory, because fossils always appear suddenly, perfectly constituted, without any form of mutation. **But** the theory of Monod is untenable when these sedimentary layers were rapidly deposited as would be expected on the occasion of a worldwide flood. Guy Berthault (a French polytechnic engineer and sediment expert) demonstrated this in a laboratory at the Colorado University by means of huge hydraulic canals of more than 20 meters length and several meters width. He showed that the sedimentary layers are not deposited one on the top of the other, during very long periods of time, but rather alongside each other and at the same time, as happens in the deltas of big rivers of our planet and according to repetitive granular-placement of the sediments; this means that the finest sediments are transported the farthest and then are deposited on the ground, taking along the smallest organic rests. The bigger and heavier sediments do not drift far and bury the biggest organic rests, as for example the dinosaurs! For Guy Berthault there is no doubt, that all the planetary sedimentary layers have been deposited at the same time, on the occasion of a gigantic planetary flood (like the universal deluge in Noah’s time!). Concerning this, compare with the articles of Guy Berthault: ‘Expériences de sédimentologie’, *Compte-rendu de l’Académie des Sciences*, 306, II No 17 (1988), pp. 717-724 and ‘Les principes de datation géologique en question (une nouvelle approche: la paléohydraulique)’, *Fusion* No 81 (May/June 2000), pp. 32-39. By the way, concerning the macroevolution, one should pay attention to the fact that *New Age* claims that humanity should concentrate its entire energy on one single central point: “Man!” According to the advocates of *New Age*, the last macroevolution will make us into perfect men!

³⁵ Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones*, p. 13.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Concerning this, see Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones*, pp. 13ff. On page 14 he refers to Colin Patterson, a former evolutionist palaeontologist and fossil expert who, when someone asked him why he did not show any pictures of in-between forms in his book, wrote the following: “...I could not, honestly, provide it, and if I were to leave it to artistic licence, would that not mislead the reader?”

1. Where is the missing link (connecting link³⁸) between animal and man, between the invertebrate and the vertebrate?³⁹ This list could be prolonged.
2. Why do we not find in nature until now such transition-pieces; like a form between a chimpanzee and man?
3. Why has evolution stopped at man – where is the *superman*?
4. From where did man get his moral consciousness, which animals are lacking (from whom man supposedly is descended)?
5. From where did man get his spiritual capacities (i.e. the knowledge of the existence of God; the so-called *intuition*, cf. Rom 1:19-21)?

Incidentally, these are questions which evolutionists themselves pose. It is their aim in research, to find answers to these questions. Many evolutionists mock Bible-believing Christians, while the latter are amused with the former, because they are convinced that they never will find answers to their questions – since they are looking in the wrong place.

The Bible claims to answer the above-mentioned questions. According to Holy Scripture, there never was and never is an evolution from a simple to a more complex species.

The evolution-theory claims that man is the last link in a development, which led step by step from dead matter via primitive forms of life to more complex living beings.

The laws of thermodynamics speak against this hypothesis. Nature rather teaches us the opposite, namely that:

All things, left to themselves lead from the complex to the simple, from organisation to disorder, to chaos.

Thermodynamics teaches that there is a tendency towards degeneration in the universe. Everything is in a process of degeneration. Available energy in a closed system decreases constantly. This is the principle of entropy: the available energy within a mechanism decreases constantly. The whole of nature points to this principle: The stars (sun, planets) cool down towards being extinguished; the magnetic field of the earth is deteriorating; radioactive substances are degenerating; rust eats away at metallic constructions; some animal species die out. In short, statistics confirm: with time, there also grows disorder.⁴⁰

Evolution-theory claims the exact opposite: the constant transformation from simple to more complex forms. Man proclaims progress while nature shows the very opposite: continual degeneration. Probably the larger part of advocates of evolution-theory insists that they alone can claim to be scientific. In truth science has long shown that many hypotheses of the evolutionists are untenable. One should better call evolution-theory a philosophy or (even more succinct) an ideology.

Take a simple example from everyday life: **a garden left to itself** produces (in the course of millions of years – thanks to the factors of *time* and *chance* – as the evolutionists claim) no good

³⁸ I.e. *the transition form*.

³⁹ Compare with Jacques Nesbitt, *Création et évolution, problèmes d'origines*, La Bégude, France: Ed. MEAF, 1976, p. 47: "But where are the fossils of these millions of stages between the amoeba and the human? Darwin believed that the gaps in his tree of evolution would one day be filled with findings. If the evolution-system would have been correct more of these transition-forms should have been found. Now in the 20th century, it is clear that these gap-stages have never existed. The history of fossils confirms unambiguously the constancy of the species. The gaps in the 'tree of descent' will never be filled." (Translated from French)

⁴⁰ Compare with Jacques Nesbitt, op. cit., 22. One may add that the law of universal biogenesis affirms this: "Life always emerges from life!"

vegetables or beautiful flowers. No! Because of lack of care it will degenerate. Evolutionists on the other hand claim the very opposite. Incidentally the illustration of a garden serves well to show that the factors *time* (billions of years) and *chance* or *luck* (coincidence) are not sufficient to produce something good, because another decisive and imperative factor is missing: the gardener, i.e. the source of intelligence and information. Without intelligence and information (→ ***intelligent design***), there can be no order, but rather chaos. Thermodynamics speaks against the Darwinist evolutionary claim, according to which life developed out of dead matter. It also needs energy... and order presupposes **intelligence**. Without intelligence, disorder takes over. In the evolutionary scheme, the factor intelligence is missing. Evolutionists suppose that the factor *intelligence* can be substituted with the factors *chance* (coincidence) and *time*.

On this presupposition, evolutionists claim that the earth is an old planet. White⁴¹ rightly observes, that if the earth was only a few thousand years old, evolution could not be the right concept, as it demands large spaces of time. Darwin himself concedes that the evolution-theory can only be held if the universe has already existed for billions of years. It was clear to him that the factor *chance*, advocated by him and his followers, takes long periods of time, even billions of years.

It needs to be added that this still would not be convincing, because even 100 billions of years would not be an answer to the question of the *prima causa* and the origin of *protoplasm* out of which supposedly everything should have evolved.

More recent calculations, partly with the same – but corrected – methods of the supporters of an evolution-theory resulted in an upper age limit of 15'000 to 20'000 years.⁴² There are also indications of a worldwide natural catastrophe some 5000-6000 years ago, which could be explained with the biblical account of the flood in Gen 6–8. All time tables put forth by the evolutionists should be scrutinised. How is it that certain fossils appear in layers of rock which belong to a different period, according to their time table? Apart from the fact that often geological layers do not correspond with ***their*** (not ours) time scale. These layers do not appear often in a unified manner. Fossils of so-called highly developed forms have apparently been found in layers of allegedly very old rock. Human remains have been found in layers of which evolutionists claim that they were formed at a time when, according to their dating, humans have not yet existed.

According to the hypothesis of evolutionists, geological layers were formed in the course of millions if not hundreds of millions of years. But many findings of fossils point rather to a sudden and not to a gradual or progressive burial. Some examples: Bats were found, which were enclosed in stalagmites before they rotted. In Canada they found thousands of locusts in glaciers; in Siberia they found well preserved mammoths, partly with plants still in their mouth. These and many other findings, for instance (vertical) petrified trees crossing various layers, speak of a sudden catastrophe and deny a gradual forming of layers which evolutionists claim to verify their dating of the earth.⁴³

⁴¹ A. J. Monty WHITE, *Quel est l'âge de la terre?* Translated from English (Lausanne: Centre Biblique Européen, 1986), p. 13. (We had no access to the English original)

⁴² Compare the chapter "Preuves en faveur d'une terre jeune" by A. J. Monty White, op. cit., pp. 85-105. White said that certain methods that had been regarded as infallible have been found to be unreliable. This refers among other things to the calculation method of the magnetic field of the earth and the carbon-14 method. See also Don Batten, op. cit., pp. 63-82; Jacques Nesbitt, op. cit., pp. 34ff as well as John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical Record and Its Scientific Implications* (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, Phillipsburg, N. J., 1961), pp. 331ff.

⁴³ See Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones*, pp. 9-13. He says, p. 10: "If the layers through which such fossil tree trunks penetrate took long ages to form on top of one another, why is the top not rotted away? This sort of (Polystrate) fossil is commonly found in association with coal seams." Compare also Jacques Nesbitt, op. cit., 41-48; Reinhard Junker and Siegfried Scherer, *Evolution: Ein kritisches Lehrbuch*, 5th updated edition. Giessen, Germany: Weyel Biologie, 2001.

Wieland mentions a further example which speaks for a rapid fossilisation:

There are countless millions of well-preserved fossil fish, even showing scales, fins, etc. In nature, a dead fish is quickly torn apart by scavengers and decomposes readily. Unless the fish were buried quickly, and the sediments (e.g. mud, sand) hardened fairly rapidly, such features would not be preserved.⁴⁴

According to Nesbitt, it would be better to scrap the current prehistoric time-scales and not to force our pupils to memorise long lists of geological time-epochs.⁴⁵ In the face of questionable methods of dating of the evolutionists one can understand this demand.⁴⁶ Instead of dating certain layers by the minerals contained, they date them by the fossils contained in them. The supposed age of these fossils depends on (a priori) long periods, which evolutionists assume (circular argument). With selected fossils that should serve as an indicator, the age of a geological layer is fixed by the place, where these fossils were found. The problem is that the evolutionists failed to provide the proof and verification of their method of dating the fossils.⁴⁷

The question arises, why has the evolution-theory become today and worldwide the only scientific explanation in almost all schools concerning the origin of different living beings? We think that the main reason is the following:

Since the fall of first man, mankind as a whole tends from nature to resist the laws of the Creator (compare Rom 1:18ff; Psa 14 and 53). Jesus has pointed out that man prefers to remain in darkness, because he does not want to break with his sinful life (compare Joh 3:17-21). In the style of *ostrich-policy*, burying its head in the sand, the existence of God is denied. Thereby man thinks he can avoid his responsibility before his Creator.

Do we understand what this is really all about it? In reality the evolution-theory has hardly anything to do with science. It is rather a kind of ideology or religion, or better a substitute religion... but of course a religion without God... a religion whose goal is to replace the true religion. Sir Julian Huxley, the former president of the UNESCO who was a prominent evolutionist biologist, uttered the following words in a TV programme: "We all jumped on 'Origin' because the concept of a God is an obstacle to our sexual behaviour."⁴⁸

Huxley was only one among millions of evolutionists who – in the style of "the-head-in-the-sand-policy" – deny the existence of God, thinking they can avoid accounting to their Creator for their deeds. At least Huxley was admitting this. But it would be still much better if many others would do so as well and if at the same time they would take the logical consequence, i.e. to change the camp... from evolutionism to creationism and so at last to honour the one, who only is worthy to

⁴⁴ Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones*, p. 10. He shows (p. 9) also a picture of a mother ichthyosaur (an extinct marine reptile) fossilised in the process of giving birth and concludes: "Such well-preserved features could not have come from mother and baby lying on the ocean floor through countless ages of slow processes."

⁴⁵ Compare also Jacques Nesbitt, op. cit., p. 38.

⁴⁶ Concerning this see also Jacques Nesbitt, op. cit., pp. 29ff; Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones*, 9-16; Henry M. Morris, *Scientific Creationism*, 2nd edition (El Cajon, CA: Master Books, 1985), pp. 131ff.

⁴⁷ While it is impossible in the context of this paper to enter into details on questions of rock layers and fossils, we want to mention in this place (as an example) the event of the eruption of *Mount Helena* in the state of Washington (USA) in 1980. In one single day a *Canyon* of 30 meters in depth and 30 meters in width was formed. Could possibly also the famous *Grand Canyon* have come into being in a similar way and not (by erosion) in the course of millions of years as of course the evolutionists — *opinio communis* — claim? Concerning this compare with Carl Wieland, *Stones and Bones*, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁸ Quoted by D. James Kennedy, *Magouilles & Boulettes Evolutionnistes* (Vuarrens, Suisse: Centre Biblique Européen, o. D.), S. 16-17. We had no access to the English original "*Evolution's Bloopers and Blunders*"; we therefore translated it back from French into English. Saying "Origin", Huxley was referring to Charles Darwin's book "*Origin of Species*".

receive honour from men, namely the Creator of the universe. Unfortunately, this is not the case even at the end of the second decade of the 21st century. On the contrary. The creationist Boris Schmidtgall complains that in 2017 in a science article (Machado-Silva 2017) entitled “Intelligent design endangers education” is claimed, “Proponents of Creationism or ID [Intelligent Design] would undermine the scientific teaching on the whole world.” Schmidtgall says that this exemplifies the fact that a factual and fair debate that recognizes the persuasive power of good arguments was not intended by the naturalists at all. According to him, one possible reason for this is the increase in findings (especially in biochemistry), which do not fit well into an interpretation of nature in the sense of the theory of evolution, but rather confirm the doctrine of creation.⁴⁹

In closing this section, a short **résumé of some arguments that speak against the evolution-theory:**

1. Evolution-theory implies that all living being came out of dead matter. One assumes a big bang which brought forth among other things, primitive forms of life (so-called protoplasm). Our objection: Where did the “original matter” and the necessary energy for the (hypothetical) *big bang* come from? Furthermore, from whence came the necessary information for such a process?
2. Where are the missing links between man and animal, for instance the link which constitutes the transition from a chimpanzee to man? Since there are still chimpanzees around, there should also still be transition-forms between chimpanzee and man present in nature. The same applies of course to the transition between fish and reptile or bird and from invertebrate to vertebrate, etc.
3. If the theory of evolution were true, why has the process of development stopped with man (rather than proceeding towards a super-man)?
4. Whence did man receive his spiritual faculties, which animals obviously do not have, if he is supposedly descended from them? From where does man have an inner knowledge (intuition) concerning the existence of a (let’s call it) higher being by which he has been created (compare Rom 1:19-21)? From where comes his conscience written in his inner being (compare Rom 2:14-15)?
5. Thermodynamics teaches us that an object left to its own resources tends to go from order to disorder. Evolution-theory stipulates the opposite: a continuing transformation of simple to more complex forms.
6. According to the time-scales of evolutionists, different layers of the earth date from different epochs (sometimes differences of hundreds of millions of years). The different species are also a result of such a long development process. We challenge to consider: the presence of the same fossils in different layers speaks for the fact that these layers were formed at the same time, even though the time-scales of the evolutionists assume different epochs for them. Fossils of animals and plants have even been found in layers, which according to the time-table of the evolutionists, would have been formed before the beginning of all life.
7. An argument based solely on the biblical text: Evolution-theory based on the factors of time and chance (coincidence) “demands” billions of years for the stipulated development of the species. If God has created the universe with the appearance of a certain age (trees with fruit, chicken that did not hatch from an egg, Adam and Eve as already grown up adults), it is not necessary to insist on such a high age of the earth.

Scripture says that all living beings were created according to their kind (Gen 1:21,24-25). The Bible then does not leave room for a **macro-evolution**, not even within the animal world:

⁴⁹ Boris Schmidtgall, *Informationen aus der Studiengemeinschaft Wort und Wissen*, Wort und Wissen Info 4/18 Nr. 125 (Baiersbronn: W+W Studiengemeinschaft Wort und Wissen, November 2018), p. 1. [We translated it from German into English]

Gen 1:25 *And God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds.*

5 As disciples of Jesus, we should have the courage to believe and trust in his Word, even if it causes derision and mockery. The Word of God is on our side!

We reject every religion or philosophy which teaches a natural "creation". According to Holy Scripture, we believe that Jesus Christ the Son of God is the Creator of all things:

10

Joh 1:3 *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

D. The unity of the human race

15 The Bible teaches that all man and nations are descended from the first two humans, i.e. from Adam and Eve:

Gen 1:27 *...he created him male and female...*

20 **Act 17:26** *...From one man he made every nation of men...*

The Bible knows nothing of a Pre-Adamite (before Adam) or Para-Adamite (beside Adam) race. The unity of the human race is also corroborated by the universality of sin:

25 **Rom 5:12** *...just as sin entered the world through one man...*

1Co 15:22 *For as in Adam all die...*

The need and necessity of salvation of all men also point to the unity of the whole human race. (See for instance Rom 3:21-25; 5:12-19).

30

1Co 15:22 *...so in Christ all will be made alive.*

The doctrine of Holy Scripture is supported by different results of science:

- 35
- **History** points to a common source of mankind.
 - **Physiology** (doctrine of the processes of life) shows, that all races are able to interbreed and are fertile. The body temperature and the average pulse frequency are identical. Human blood can be distinguished from animal blood. These facts should make evolutionists rethink their positions. Compare with the words of the apostle Paul in 1Co 15:39: the flesh of man, animals,
 - 40 birds and fish are different. It is an old myth that the different colours of skin of various human races are caused by a different descent.⁵⁰ There is also only one and the same skin colour pigment; only the concentration of the substance melanin is different, according to different races.
 - **Psychology** postulates psychological and mental laws for the whole of mankind. The universal applicability of a philosophy or religion can best be explained by a common origin of the
 - 45 human race.

⁵⁰ Racists among others cite this. Compare in contrast Carl Wieland, op. cit., 27-28.

- **The Hebrew word for *man*** in general (i.e. for the human race) is *Adam*⁵¹ (compare Gen 1:26; 6:7; Num 23:19). This word never appears in the plural. It designates the human species. Christ is the *last Adam* or the *second Adam*. As the second man he is the head of a new humanity. The fact that the word *Adam* appears in Hebrew only in the singular (see the clear example in Gen 6:1.3) can also be understood as pointing to the unity of the human family. Incidentally, the root of the Hebrew verb *'ādām* signifies *to be red*, from which also the name *Edom* (same root) is derived. Edom is “the red land”. Also the earth, i.e. the ground is described as *red*. The feminine form of this root is אֶדְמָה (*'ādāmāh*) meaning *earth, earthly, field or cultivated ground*. The human race is called *Adam* and it is taken from *'ādāmāh* (i.e. from the earth): see Gen 2:7 and 3:19. God created Adam out of the dust (Hebr.: עָפָר [*'āphār*]) of the earth (Hebr.: *'ādāmāh*) it says in Gen 2:7. So the words of the apostle Paul in 1Co 15:47 can be well understood: *The first man* [our ancestor Adam] *was of the dust of the earth* (earthly); *the second man* [referring to Christ] *from heaven*.

E. The vocation of man

- 15 In this subchapter we will try to give answers to the question concerning the meaning of life (for man). Why man? Why are we in this world? Atheists among the evolutionists have no answer to this question, because they believe that we are solely a product of chance. It should not surprise us that the advocates of this conception do not have a great respect of life. To kill someone or to abort a baby should not pose a big problem... according to their understanding, man, a baby or an embryo is only a product of chance. Added to that, there is for him no law that stands above man. Man makes his own laws. The logical consequence of such a concept of life or worldview is that of the Epicureans and Hedonists: *Come, let us eat, drink, kill and abort, because tomorrow we have to die anyway and everything is over... there is no God before whom we have to give an account!* This is the logical consequence of a life emancipated from God.⁵² If we are only a product of chance, then life has no real meaning, then let me live today, amuse myself, get out of it what is best for me, no matter at whose expense... others should look for themselves too. I have to defend myself against others; this is the way it is: the stronger wins. So let's go ahead, who knows, tomorrow I may be buried, so I have to enjoy today to the full. This is the logical consequence of a mindset of people like Hegel and Darwin. If it is allowed to fish and to hunt game... why not also hunt and kill man... as it was common custom until recently in so-called “primitive” tribes of South America, Africa and Asia? Why should it be forbidden to kill and to eat man, if he is just *one* of thousands of stages in an evolutionary process characterised by chance? For man, living without God, life has actually no real meaning; for him, life is in the truest sense of the word *non-sense*. He does not live he rather vegetates, as an animal from which he claims to be descended. This may be a bit too provocative but for statistical and possibly apologetic reasons one could dare the following test: Officially greet a “person of some standing”, of whom you know that he is an advocate of the atheistic version of evolution-theory, with the words: “Good afternoon, Mr. Monkey, how are you?” In case the person so addressed sues you for offence, you should point to the fact that the accuser himself explicitly declares to be a descendent from apes. At least this would be an interesting method to get a discussion rolling... even if admittedly the method is a bit out of the

⁵¹ *Man* in Hebrew is called with the word אָדָם (ʾĀdām), the feminine form of the same root (אֶדְמָה [*'ādmāh*]) means **woman**.

⁵² In his tract *Magouilles & Boulettes Evolutionnistes*, traduit de l'anglais [the English original is not available] (Vuarrens, Suisse: Centre Biblique Européen, n. d.), p. 16., D. James Kennedy cites the atheistic evolutionist Aldous Huxley (Author of the famous book *Brave New World*) saying, “I had reasons to declare the world as meaningless, I assumed that there is no meaning and purpose and I did not find it difficult to find satisfactory reasons for my assumption . . . For me as undoubtedly for most of my contemporaries the philosophy of absurdity (« meaninglessness ») was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation, which we were looking for, was at the same time a certain liberation from a political and economic system (capitalism) and also a liberation from a moral system. We rejected morals because it stood in the way of our sexual freedom.”

way...? We only want to point (in a somewhat provocative way) to the ethical implications of evolution-theory. We shall return to this later.

1. Called to fellowship

a.) First - fellowship with God

5 **Gen 1:27** *God created man in his own image*

See also Isa 43:7 und Col 1:16.

10 A man who does not live in fellowship with God has not yet discovered the true meaning of life. He does not really know life, the true life. Man has a longing for fellowship with God, his Creator (cf. Psa 42:2-3). In paradise, in Eden, living in the presence of Yahweh was the fulfilment of Adams calling. For us today this is the life of faith. Faith comes from the Word of God (cf. Rom 10:17). Bible-reading, the visit to worship services or prayer meetings should satisfy our desire for fellowship with God.

15 God too, wants to have fellowship with men, his creatures:

Gen 3:8-9 *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"*

20

It is this desire, to have fellowship with man, which also motivated God to bring his work of salvation to fulfilment.

25 b.) Second - fellowship with man

Not only theologians but also sociologists and psychologists have long since realised, that man is a social being:

Gen 1:26 *...let us make man in our image, in our likeness...*

30

Only man who lives according to his calling in fellowship with God is actually able to live in authentic fellowship with his neighbour; and this with the help of the Holy Spirit. Compare this with the doctrine of "monads" by the German philosopher and mathematician Leibniz.⁵³ The individual monads are connected with each other insofar as they live in touch with the Creator of all monads. The monad, i.e. man, who does not live in fellowship with the Creator of all things (all monads, i.e. also of man), has therefore no real fellowship with his neighbour. Indeed, man without God lives ultimately for himself. Egoism is the root of all evils: envy, war, hatred, murder, immorality, theft, lies... Man renewed by the Holy Spirit will turn away from his negative attitudes and dark practices. This also causes a decisive change in his attitudes towards his neighbour. So-called modern methods like, for instance, meditation, group pedagogy or group dynamics are pseudo-solutions, which drive man even more into the dead-end of egoism. Only the restoration of man's relationship with his Creator leads to a harmonisation of relationships with his fellow man.

35

40

⁵³ He was a Lutheran.

1Jo 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

That which social science tries to achieve in vain, God gives to his own by his Spirit.

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

40

According to the opinion of many modern (liberal) theologians, we meet God in our neighbour.⁵⁴ In their view our service to God is “fulfilled” in our responsibility towards our neighbours. A biblical theology – with a clear theocentric orientation – becomes a “horizontal theology”, reduced to a humanistic theology. Correctly, the word *theology* should be evacuated, because in this conception God stands no more in the centre. It would be more fitting to speak of **humanism** with a certain religious varnish. In the context of this theological concept one speaks of a **social gospel**. In the religious milieu of this kind there is no question of a restoration of our relationship with God through the forgiveness of sin by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Many even deny the substitute death of Jesus Christ. They are of the opinion, that a God of love cannot be so bloody to demand such a death. For them this is the **cruel God of Old Testament Judaism**. Advocates of this theology insist rather on the model of an exemplary life, which Jesus has left for us. So there is only talk of loving your neighbour. In this theological view there is no more room for themes like *judgement* or *condemnation*. One is not concerned anymore with salvation and eternal life in an after world, because this would again be the *vertical direction*. The horizontal orientation is preferred much more: one is only concerned with earthly things, temporal rather than eternal matters. This sad “reduction” is strongly expressed in **GAIA-Theology**.⁵⁵ Actually the mere use of the word *theology* in this context almost borders on blasphemy. This concept could be called a kind of *neo-paganism* or one could speak of **neo-panteism**. *GAIA* is the name of the (old) Greek earth goddess, whence the conception of *the mother earth*. Followers of this philosophy (it is more fitting to call these ideas a *philosophy* rather than a *theology*) preach a life in harmony with our mother earth and the cosmos. We ask to be not misunderstood and slandered: a Christian, faithful to the Bible, should also respect nature, because in his view it has been created by God. But the aim to preserve nature is not enough. Creature and creation can be no substitute for God. Followers of this world view, i.e. neo-panteism, worship creation, the cosmos... In their concept there is no room for a personal and sovereign God, who is the Creator of all things. See in this connection the clear words in Rom 1:18-31. In the eyes of God, followers of this concept are blinded, perverted, because they worship the creature rather than the Creator, God... (cf. Rom 1:25). God on the other hand cares for his creation (after all it’s his creation!), and he wants that Christians do so too. God cares even for sparrows, for animals, for the poor, widows, orphans... The Law of Moses contains many instructions to respect our environment and animals. The godless among the protectors of environment (there are also godly ones among them) are not doing justice if they condemn Christians *en bloc*, saying that (starry eyed) they have only the after world in view and neglect thereby this earth; that Christianity constitutes therefore a danger for this earth and mankind. The Law of Moses and the commandments of Jesus give no reason to neglect our creation. They teach us on the other hand that this world is not all there is and that man is called and designated to worship and serve his Creator and not (his) creation. This all the more, because this earth and this heaven will pass away and we await a new creation⁵⁶ according to his promise.

⁵⁴ We do not deny that this is often the case, but it is only a means which God uses to reveal himself to man. He has mainly spoken through his prophets, his Son and the apostles (cf. Heb 1:1-3; 2:1-4) and speaks today mainly through his Word, the Bible, which is so to speak the heritage or inheritance which they have left for us. This revelation of God to man (from above to below, a vertical connection) cannot be evacuated under any circumstance to be substituted with a horizontal relationship where God reveals himself through my neighbour: only a horizontal relationship and revelation. The vertical relationship and revelation of God to man plays only a secondary or no role at all in this conception.

⁵⁵ Derived from the Greek ἡ γῆ (*hē gē* = *the earth, the land*).

⁵⁶ We refer in this context to some words of the apostle Paul: “Where your treasure is, there is your heart also... Nobody can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and Mammon... Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Mat 6:21,24,33); “Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your heart on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things

2. Called to rule

The calling of man is clearly defined and set out:

Gen 1:28 *...be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.*

The task of man consists of:

Gen 2:15 *And Yahweh Elohim took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.*

Gen 2:20 *So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field...*

Unfortunately the one who should have ruled over creation became only too soon someone who was dominated himself. The ruler became a slave. Because of the fall, through his sin, man became a slave of sin and of the one who managed to deceive him: i.e. a slave of Satan! Think of all humans, who are slaves to drugs, nicotine, alcohol, sexual perversions...

Are we aware of the meaning of the new freedom, which we have gained in Christ (see Gal 5:13)? Concerning dominion over this earth, this refers of course also to our environment and to our own outer (body-hygiene, etc.) and inner (our wishes, motives, thoughts...) nature.

3. Called to eternal life

I.e. the destiny of man to live for ever in paradise:

Gen 2:17 *but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.*

The true calling of man was actually to live eternally. The tree of life in the Garden of Eden must have played a certain role (cf. Gen 3:22; cp. Rev 22:2⁵⁷).

above, not on earthly things." (Col 3:1ff). In the context where these words of Jesus and the apostle Paul were spoken people are exhorted to love their neighbours (even their enemies). It should not be necessary to insist that all these accusations against biblical Christianity (we speak only of bible-orientated Christianity and not of pseudo- or Christianity by name only), that they are neglecting their environment and neighbours, is not justified. Everyone who is honestly concerned to live with God's help according to the precepts of Holy Scripture, automatically also cares for peace and justice in the world... The accusation, the Bible is "otherworldly" is out of place. A genuine Christian seeks the welfare of this world and its inhabitants (compare for instance Psa 34:3; Isa 1:16-19; Jer 29:7 etc.). The Bible, by which he is (or *should be*) guided, challenges him to care for this world. But all this does not change the fact that the Creator of the universe himself has said, that this creation will pass away and that he will create a new heaven and a new earth (see Isa 65:17; Mat 24:35; 2Pe 3:13-14 and Rev 21:1ff). May the unbelievers please "forgive" us the "sin" that we believe in the promise of God and may they at the same time observe, that Christians normally despite their hope of a new creation, contribute more to the welfare of this present creation as unbelievers and conscious atheists. These latter often seek only their gain – a consequence of egoism, which is part of our fallen nature. To this fallen nature we are to die with the help of God through Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 6:1-11; Gal 2:20), that liberated from selfishness, we should no longer live to ourselves but for God and our neighbour (compare Mar 10:45; Rom 15:1-3). In other words: the followers of true biblical Christianity will contribute more to the welfare of humanity and this world than representatives of other religions and philosophies.

⁵⁷ Rev 21:1–22:5 speaks of a state of perfection, i.e. an eternal state, while the descriptions in the parallel passage Eze 47:12-13 are referring to the time of the millennium, which is not yet the eternal state: observe the verses 11 and 12

Because of his fall, man has lost the ability to live according to his calling. Before the fall he was able, not to sin, i.e. to remain in a state of holiness.⁵⁸ But because of his fall man has lost this ability and he became a slave of sin. His natural state now may be called “*non posse non peccare*”: “*not able, not to sin.*” Why? Because man is a sinner since the fall and sin (sinful nature) “produces”, i.e. brings forth, sins.

In the last chapter which deals with hereditary sin and sins, we shall come back to the subject. Only through reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ, who cleanses man, who trusts in him, man can return to his true and original calling: namely eternal life! What an error, to reject him! At the end of this course we shall briefly return to this theme... we say briefly, because these questions belong actually to *Soteriology* (the doctrine of salvation). Because man, since the fall of the first man, is by nature lost in sin (cf. Rom 5:8-12.18-21; Eph 2:1ff; Psa 51:7), it is chronologically more fitting to speak first of the Saviour, before speaking of eternal life, which man lost in his fall.

Joh 10:10 *I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.*

Joh 14:19 *...because I live, you also will live.*

Believers are challenged to testify to a fulfilled life in Christ. Unfortunately too many Christians do not realise this chance and live only for themselves.

which do not fit the description of eternity. This also throws light on the fact that in Eze 47 the *Dead Sea* is still mentioned; while in eternity there will be no more sea (cf. Rev 21:1).

⁵⁸ The Latin theological term (*terminus technicus*) for this goes: “*posse non peccare*”, i.e. “*to be able, not to sin*”.

II. THE NATURE OF MAN

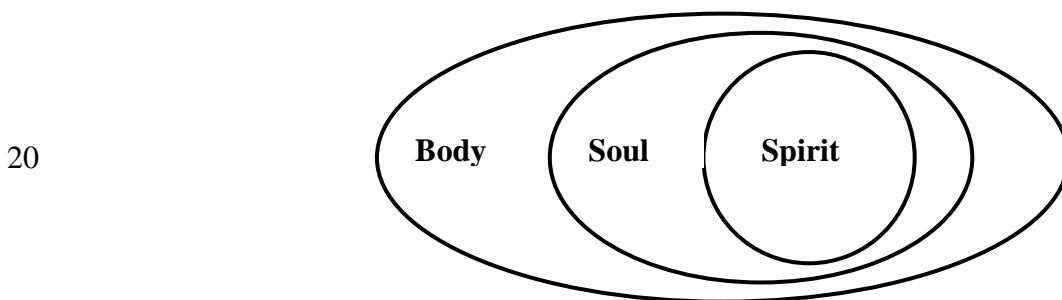
As already mentioned, man is the result of a special act of creation by God and not of an evolution by stages:

5 **Gen 1:27** *God created man*

Man was formed from the dust of the ground and the breath of God. Man has a material and an immaterial nature, corresponding with the "two worlds" in which we live.

10 **Gen 2:7** *Dust from the ground* (cf. Job 33:6: *clay*)
 Breath of life (cf. Job 33:4: *breath of the Almighty/All sufficient*)

15 The result of the union of these "two entities" was a *living being*.⁵⁹ The connection between the dust of the ground and the breath of God could also be called *personality*. This is the uniqueness of man:



25 A possible interpretation of Gen 2:7 would be: the union of the body (the material part) with the breath of God brought forth a *living soul*, a *nepheš* (נֶפֶשׁ), a personality, because "*nepheš*" denotes not only *soul*, but among other meanings also a *person*. Job 33:4 is a passage where the *Spirit of God* (*Rūach 'Ēl*) is set in parallel with the *breath of the Almighty, the All-sufficient* (in Hebrew: נְשִׁמַּת שְׁדַי [Nišmat Šadday]). We assume that the term *breath of life* in Gen 2:7 refers to the Spirit of God. Holy Scripture shows that when a man receives the Holy Spirit, then this Spirit lives within that man.⁶⁰ That being the case, the soul then is, so to speak, the connection between body and spirit. Man is a personality (an individual); therefore he cannot be divided (split). One cannot split him up into spirit, soul and body, because a separation of the spirit from the body would cause the immediate death of man.

35 Animals and humans are distinguished through *life* from the rest of creation (plants and minerals). Nevertheless, the Bible nowhere teaches the immortality of the souls of animals.

40 As a *living being*, an animal also has a kind of *soul-life*, but this on an *animal level*. It is apparently not necessary for us to know more on the matter, since the Bible does not give more information concerning this issue. It only states:

Gen 2:7 *living soul (nefeš hayyāh)* [for man]

⁵⁹ In Hebrew נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה "l'nefeš hayyāh" (a living soul).

⁶⁰ See our brochure on *Pneumatology*.

Gen 2:19 *living being* (or *soul*): “*nefeš ḥayyāh*” (in Hebrew the same term for animals and man)

5 The difference seems to lie in the fact that man in contrast to animals does not only have a soul but also a spirit.⁶¹

10 Animals are so to speak *animated matter without a spirit*. Between man and animal there exists an “unbridgeable gap”. Man is distinguished from animals in his being, in that he owns a spiritual component. Further, animals differ from man through the flesh of man (see *supra*). Already the apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, drew attention to this scientific fact (comp. 1Co 15:39).⁶²

Angels are beings without bodies; they cannot die (see Luk 20:36). Man is, according to Psa 8:5-9, initially lower than angels, but as a child of God, i.e. through participation in divine life/nature (cf. 2Pe 1:4), man will one day judge angels (1Co 6:3⁶³).

15 A. The image of God and conscience

20 As already mentioned in the previous chapter, there are many who claim that man was originally a primitive wild being, which only gradually developed to the present level. Based on this speculative a priori, followers of this hypothesis reach totally erring conclusions: So it is claimed for instance, that earlier man knew no marriage but rather lived together in hordes. Observing contemporary mankind, one hardly gains the impression that man develops progressively through different stages towards a higher being. Rather the opposite is the case, i.e. man is sinking lower and lower. As we say this, we do not ignore that man has achieved remarkable cultural, technical and scientific progress.

25 Relating to the original state of man the Holy Scriptures leave us not in ignorance and doubt:

Gen 1:26.27 *Let us make man in our image. . . . God created man in his own image...*

30 Compare also Gen 5:1 and 9:6; 1Co 11:7; Col 3:10; Jam 3:9.

The Hebrew word תְּצַלֵּם (*tselem*) means *picture* or *image*. The first man was an image or shadow of God. Scripture says that God revealed himself in Christ. The true image of God, the Father, is none other than his only Son (cf. Col 1:15; Heb 1:3).

35 The first Adam was the shadow of the *last* (i.e. *second*) Adam. The goal of our life of sanctification is therefore:

Rom 8:29 *...for those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son...*

⁶¹ Below we shall address further “controversies” raised by scholars: Dichotomy or Trichotomy, i.e. is man a *two-part* or a *tri-part* being? We believe that man is distinguished from animals by his spirit. Animals have, as mentioned, some sort of soul-life but they don’t have a spirit. Trichotomy enables us in principle to a better distinction between man and animal. One could even raise the question whether Dichotomy does not makes concessions to the theory of evolution.

⁶² This constitutes incidentally a further argument against the theory of evolution.

⁶³ This refers undoubtedly to *fallen angels* (cf. our brochure on *Angelology*).

1. The significance of the image of God

The image of God which man bears **does not refer to the bodily features** of man even if our physical appearance expresses something of our inner spiritual being. Therefore our earthly body is referred to as natural body (see 1Co 15:44: σῶμα ψυχικόν [*sōma psychikón*]: a *psychic* or *natural* body).

The actual essence of the image of God in man does not lie in the physical appearance of man (in which Yahweh probably appeared to Adam and Eve in Eden [Gen 3:8] and to Abraham apparently under a tree in Mamre [Gen 18–19]), because:

Joh 4:24 *God is Spirit...*⁶⁴

a.) The image of God, which man bears, refers to his personality

Studying Gen 1:1-25 in order to understand what “*in our image*” respectively “*like us*” means, we find the following leading information:

V. 3: → “*God said*”: God must have **thought**.

V. 22: → “*God blessed*”: God must have **loved**.

V. 1: → “*God created*”: God must have **willed**.

Personality could be defined in the following attributes:

To think, to feel and to will.

Mind, emotion and will constitute our personality. There are also other suggestions to define our personality, like *self-consciousness* or *self-realisation*.

God is a person because he can ***think, feel and will***.⁶⁵

As a person, God thought and expressed these thoughts in words. God created Adam in his image, therefore it is said:

Gen 2:19-20 Adam gave names to all the animals

In other words: since his creation Adam has the ability to think and to express his thoughts in words.

As a person God loves, he expresses his love by blessing his creatures. God created Adam in his own image.

Gen 2:18 *...I will make a helper suitable for him.*

⁶⁴ Which does not mean that God cannot appear in human form (see the appearances of Yahweh in the Old Testament) in a few mentioned passages: Gen 3:8; 18:1.22; 19:24. In Gen 17:22; 32:30; 35:13-15 the name *Elohim* is even used for God as he appears to man. Yahweh, respectively Elohim, who appears to man in these passages is identical with the **Angel of the Lord**. This is clearly a so-called “Christophany”, i.e. an appearance of the pre-existent Son of God (see clearly in Exo 3:2.4.6.14 und 14:19.24). Compare to our course on *Theology* and our remark concerning the *Angel of the Lord* in the brochure *Angelology*.

⁶⁵ See also the chapter concerning the **attributes of God** in *Theology*.

Gen 2:24 ...for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Adam had the ability to love. **Adam had feeling.**

As a person God wills and he expressed his will in his actions. God created Adam in his own image. “*Let us make man.*” The Hebrew form of the verb, the co-hortative in the first person plural (*let us* or *we want...*) is certainly an expression of will.

Gen 3:6 ...and she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Adam was created with the capacity to will. Through his choice he expressed his will.

The first man (as created by God) was also in that sense created in the image of God, because he was a **person/personality**. Adam was a person endowed with intelligence, emotion and will. The personality of man cannot be destroyed; it cannot die because it is made in the image of God. Even after the fall into sin man retains the image of God.

b.) The image of God, which man bears, also refers to his conscience or his moral consciousness

In the Old Testament, there is no specific word for *conscience*. There, conscience is a function of the heart (cf. 1Sa 24:6; Job 27:6; see 1Jo 3:19-20). In the New Testament, we do find a special word for *conscience*, namely συνείδησις (*syneidēsis*).⁶⁶ It appears some 30 times (for instance in Act 24:16 and Heb 9:14; incidentally not in the gospels!).

The image of God implies a moral imprint. Through the work of salvation Christ makes it possible for man to return to his original divine norm. This true norm as it was proclaimed and exhibited in Christ allows conclusions to the state of man before the fall:

Eph 4:24 in true righteousness and holiness

Before the fall, man was not only without guilt (negative), but holy (positive). This was not a perfect or absolute holiness which only God possesses but a holy disposition (pre-disposition), which should prove itself (cf. Heb 5:8). Before the fall, man was holy, free from sin, untouched by evil. This holiness was only lost in the fall. It was also in that moment that man lost the ability to do good, but moral consciousness and moral will remained with man.

The conscience consists of two components:

1. A rational component
2. An emotional component

The first (rational) component has a discerning character. It condemns certain acts, respectively judges them, whether they are right or wrong. This judgement is then passed on to the mind.

The emotional component is impulsive. We become aware of a demand upon us: *I should* or *I should not*. The conscience affects our mind, emotion and will.

⁶⁶ This word is derived from two roots “*syn*” = “*with*” and “*oida*” = “*to know*”. This “*syneidēsis*” is so to speak an inner witness that knows (actually a witness insofar as it can accuse me).

The conscience is the moral judge of the soul:

Rom 2:15 *...their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing or else excusing one another...*

The conscience can only judge according to an inbuilt law. **To have a good conscience** means to know that our behaviour and/or acts conform to given norms. As soon as we act against our moral knowledge, we experience a bad conscience.

Jer 17:1 *sin is engraved . . . on the tablets of their hearts*

Rom 2:15 *the requirements of the law are written on their hearts*

This shows us the immense importance of biblical proclamation and Christian education. Our conscience usually judges us according to criteria “dictated” by our cultures. But it should rather judge according to the biblical message. This is a big problem in our churches: the principles of the gospel are often sacrificed on the altar of culture or in other words, one sticks to one’s own culture even at the expense of the gospel! How is the situation with us and in our churches? Are culture, fashion and trend winning over against biblical-divine principle or do we have the courage to swim against the current? Each Christian is in danger to conform to the world... and *his* culture. For each Christian the same principle applies: one has to obey God rather than man... culture, trends, etc. (cf. Act 5:29).

Through sin our conscience has been darkened. Its reaction is not the way it should be. Often it even judges wrongly and perverse. This is the case if one calls “good” what according to God’s standard is “evil”, and “evil” what is actually “good” (cf. Isa 5:20). It is particularly in the moral consciousness that the influence of the Word of God is felt. One only needs to compare the so-called “Christian” countries with certain pagan people/tribes who have only recently come into contact with the gospel.

With people who are born again, the conscience gains an increasing significance. It has been cleansed by the blood of Christ:

Heb 9:14 *...how much more, then, will the blood of Christ . . . cleanse our conscience from acts that lead to death [dead works].*

Heb 10:22 *...having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience...*

The **Holy Spirit** awakens the conscience and challenges it to cooperation. In conformity with the **Word of God** it will judge rightly. The impulse of the conscience should never substitute the Word of God and the working of the Holy Spirit:

1Co 4:4 *...my conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.*

In this passage in 1Co 4, Paul says that he has (at least at the time) a good conscience. In any case, he is not conscious before God and man of anything that would not be right. But he adds, that this does not mean that he is perfect; it could well mean that there are faults in his life and behaviour of which he is not aware, i.e. at the time the Holy Spirit has not shown up any wrong. Having a good conscience at the moment does not mean that we are without faults; possibly we will realise some dark points at a later stage – be it through the exhortation of a brother or the reading of the Word of God.

Rom 9:1*...my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit.*

The conscience is not an original authority: it points to something higher than itself. It is the echo of the voice of God. In its continual and noble demand, that the right and the good should be done, it is at the same time the best inner proof of the existence of a personal God, before whom we are accountable. It also points man to the absolute holiness of God and to the fact that man is created in his image.

2. Consequences of the image of God**a.) God protects human life**

Animals may be killed:

Gen 9:3*everything that lives and moves will be food for you*

Different is the case of man:

Gen 9:6*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man...*

Man has not the right to terminate his own life (suicide or euthanasia) or that of his fellow man, because the life of man belongs to God who is his Creator.

b.) The personality of man is indestructible

Even death cannot annihilate the human person (Luk 16:19-31); it exists for ever. Concerning his physical body, since the fall into sin, man is subject to mortality, but **his personality remains eternally:** be it as a personality for the glory of God or to its own shame. God honours his own image even in sinful and lost human beings; and because of this they exist into all eternity cf. Rev 14:9-11; 20:14-15; Mar 9:48.

c.) Man should rule over the creatures below him

The task to rule over all the other creatures is not, so to speak, constituting the image of God, but rather a consequence of it (cf. Gen 1:28).

d.) Fellowship with God and fellowship among man

The fact that God created man in his own image has consequences for our social life, i.e. for our whole society (compare for instance Lev 19:18; Rom 13:9):

Gen 3:8*...they heard the sound of the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim)...*

Man can live in fellowship with God, but also fellowship among man is (still) part of God's plan. This is the reason why God created for Adam a suitable helper (cf. Gen 2:18). On the one hand Eve was bearing the image of God (Gen 1:27), on the other she was a **reflection** (or rather **glory**) of Adam (cf. 1Co 11:7). Adam recognised that Eve was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh (cf. Gen 2:23).

We should also not forget that we (as believers) are a *reflection* of Jesus Christ. Therefore we are exhorted to live holy lives and to give room to the Spirit of God to transform us into the image of Jesus Christ.

- 5 **2Co 3:18** *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

When we shall have reached the state of perfection we shall become like he is:

- 10 **1Jo 3:2-3** *Dear friends, now we are children of God and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*

15 **B. The immaterial nature of man**

Man has a material as well as an immaterial nature:

- Gen 2:7** *dust of the ground and Breath of Yahweh Elohim...*

- 20 The material nature – the body – will be dealt with in the next sub-chapter (“C”).

1. The relation between spirit and soul

If one reads Gen 2:7 carefully, questions concerning the relation between spirit and soul arise. Are the two identical or must they be seen as distinguished entities? In other words: does man consist of two or of three parts?

- 25 If we say that man consists of **two parts** (**dichotomy** = partition into two, from the Greek *διχοτομέω* [*dichotoméō*] = *to divide into two*), then we assume that *spirit* and *soul* are not two different entities, but rather the same principle, only observed from two different points of view, i.e. *spirit* and *soul* are two different observations of the same element. Man, so to speak, consists of two levels: the ground floor is called *body*; the first floor is called *soul* if I look downwards and *spirit*, if I look upwards.

- 35 For the **concept of dichotomy** the following arguments among others are put forward: **(a)** The words *soul* and *spirit* are used interchangeable (cf. Heb 12:23; Rev 6:9); **(b)** not only to the spirit of man but also to his soul are ascribed spiritual capacities (compare Mar 12:30).

- 40 If we say that man is tripartite (**trichotomy** = partition into three), then we assume that man consists of three parts (or rather *levels*), i.e. *body*, *soul* and *spirit*. *Spirit* and *soul* are then two differentiated entities. For the **concept of trichotomy** the following arguments are put forward (i.e. passages where distinction is made between *spirit* and *soul*):

- 45 **1Th 5:23** *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole **spirit**, **soul** and **body** be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Heb 4:12

*For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to **dividing soul and spirit**...*

It will be best not to be too dogmatic and not to insist with absolute sovereignty on the one or the other of these theories. One can say that Gen 2:7 points to a division into two as well as an indication of a threefold division (the expression *man became*⁶⁷). The soul is the seat of the human personality. One could say that it is the result of the union of spirit and body.

In 1Co 2:14 it says literally, *the natural/psychic man does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God...* The Greek word ψυχικός (*psychikós* = *psychic*) appears 6 times in the New Testament and there always in contrast to πνευματικός (*pneumatikós* = *spiritual*); also 1Co 2:14 see 1Co 15:44.46; Jud 19; Jam 3:15).

The relevant Greek words are:

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------|------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>Spirit</i> | = | <i>pneuma</i> | therefore: | <i>anthrōpos pneumatikós</i> | = | <i>spiritual man</i> |
| <i>Soul</i> | = | <i>psychē</i> | therefore: | <i>anthrōpos psychikós</i> | = | <i>natural ("soulish") man</i> |

2. The origin of the soul

In this section the word *soul* stands for the whole immaterial nature of man. From where do humans, i.e. the descendants of Adam, receive their immaterial nature?

a.) The theory of the pre-existence of the soul

Representatives of this theory assume that the soul of man already exists even before procreation; at the moment of conception or sometime later it enters the body. This theory is taught for instance in Platonism (Greek philosophy) and by some Talmudic theologians. This concept reminds us of *metempsychosis* (transmigration of the soul), i.e. the theory of reincarnation. Followers of Brahmanism and of Buddhism believe that after man's death his soul is reincarnated in another body – either in an animal or in a human body.

Our objections against this theory:

- If the soul has already sinned in its pre-existent state, this would be incompatible with the Pauline doctrine of sin (cf. Rom 5:12ff; compare Psa 51:7).
- If the soul has not yet sinned (i.e. before its actual existence on earth), how is it possible, that it stands under the sin of Adam (cf. Rom 5:12-18), i.e. how has it inherited the sinful nature of Adam?
- How does sin enter into this (supposedly pre-existent) soul?
- Why does the soul not remember its former state and condition? We are reminded of certain followers of a reincarnation theory, who ask themselves: what have we done in our former life (good or bad), so that we are incarnated in our present actual form? See also Heb 9:27.

⁶⁷ In Hebrew: וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּיתָה (way^hhī hā'ādām l'nepheš hayyāh = *and he became [to] a living soul*). For information: we transcribe the Hebrew character "ח" (*Chet* or *hêth*) with the German "ch" and not with the conventional character "h", which does not exist in all fonts.

b.) The theory of a direct creation of the soul (*creatianism*)

According to this theory⁶⁸ the soul of each man is created directly (as it were *ex nihilo*) and enters man at the time of conception or birth or in some time between. One could say that God creates the individual souls as it were *ad hoc*.

Our objections against this theory:

- Why then does the soul sin?
- Or has God created sinful souls?
- If it were so, why are there not only physical but also spiritual and/or psychological similarities between children and their parents?

As far as procreation is concerned, this theory puts man in the end on a lower level than animals, because these procreate beings *after their kind*.

c.) Traducianism

The whole human race has been created in Adam and multiplies as far as body and soul are concerned through natural procreation. Dictionary definition: “a view according to which the human soul comes into being at conception as a scion or a branch of the father's soul.” Since Adam then all souls are created only indirectly by God. In Gen 1 and 2 it states that the creation has been completed. From then on God (or rather Christ) is “only” the preserver and/or keeper of creation and its inherent laws of procreation (cf. Col 1:17; Heb 1:3).

Arguments for traducianism:

- In Gen 2:7 it speaks of a singular/unique breathing of the breath of God into the nose of man, i.e. into his body.
- Holy Scripture speaks of descendants that were in the loins of their forefathers (see Heb 7:9-10: *Levi in the loins of Abraham*, his great grandfather).
- Traducianism explains the question of the sinful nature (of all man): “*sinful from the time my mother conceived me*” Psalms 51:7. Sinful nature is passed on into the whole being and not only the physical characteristics.
- The analogy with plants and animals does not point towards constant new creations, but a continual descent/derivation.
- This also explains the hereditary laws of families within races.

In this context we draw attention to the miracle of becoming a human being (incarnation) of Christ (cf. 1Ti 3:16):

Luk 1:35 ...so the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Impulse for thought: In connection with questions around abortion, it is constantly discussed, at which moment the beginning of human life lies. Compare Psalms 139:13-16: Life has its beginning with procreation at the time of insemination/conception. Each attempt at abortion is basically murder, even if the foetus is only some days old.

Psa 139:16 literally: “your eyes saw my unformed body” or: “when I was still unformed [an embryo] your eyes saw me.”

⁶⁸ Please do not confuse *creatianism* (immediate creation of the soul) with *creationism* (creation within six 24-hour-days).

This signifies that God is not absent at the procreation of each human being.

3. The spirit

The biblical term for *spirit* means at the same time “*wind*”:

In the Old Testament:

According to context, the Hebrew word ***Rūʾch*** (רוּחַ)⁶⁹ can have the following meanings: *wind, breath, air, life, soul or spirit* (of man or of God).

In the New Testament:

According to the context, the Greek word ***pneuma*** (τὸ πνεῦμα) can mean: *breath, wind, seat of the inner life of man, spirit* (of man or of God) and *spirits of deceased or angels* (according to attribute an angel of God or a fallen angel, i.e. a demon). The applicable context of an attribute or a genitive gives information as to the meaning of the word in a particular text.

An example for ***breath***: see for instance Ecc 3:21; for ***wind*** and ***spirit*** see Eze 37:9. For ***spirit***:

1. ***Holy Spirit*** (only 3 times in the O. T.; e. g. in Psa 51:13. Normally the Spirit is rather called Spirit of God: cf. Jud 6:34 (***the Spirit of Yahweh***)).
2. ***Spirit of man*** as the innermost being: in the O. T. cf. for instance Isa 26:9; in the N. T. cf. 1Co 2:11.

One cannot say “***man is spirit***,” but he **has** a spirit. The subject of an individual is the soul. The principle that moves us, is the spirit (Job 12:10).

Psa 51:14 ...grant me a willing spirit...

Luk 23:46 ...Father into your hands I commit my spirit!

While in some passages *soul* and *spirit* stand parallel, this does not mean that they are identical. The spirit is the invigorating and moving principle of the soul, so to speak the drive to action.

Probably, the spirit of man has the following three functions:

- **Seat of the conscience**, which stands above the soul (cf. Psa 51:12; Rom 8:16).
- **Seat of intuition**, i.e. an inner knowledge of the existence of God (Rom 1:19-21).
- **Seat of the relationship to God** (cf. Rom 1:9; 8:15).

3. ***The spirit, as creative intelligence in man***: One speaks also of the spirit as the core of one's thoughts or the character of a book or law. It is said for instance: in this text (or *book*) *one can discern the spirit of a particular person*.

⁶⁹ The Hebrew word ***Rūʾch*** (= *spirit* of man or of God, according to context) is feminine while the corresponding Greek word ***pneuma*** is neuter.

4. The soul

a.) Soul means life

Lev 17:11 *for the life of a creature [literally: “the soul”] is in the blood.*

5 **Gen 35:18** *...as her soul was in departing, (for she died)...*

This term designates in the Bible often the whole, living man; similar to the German or English word **Person**:

10 **Exo 1:5** *And all the souls⁷⁰ that came out of the loins of Jacob were 70 in number.*

Act 2:41 *...and about three thousand were added to their number (literally: souls⁷¹) that day.*

b.) The soul is the seat of the personality

15 It is the seat or centre of all spiritual activities. The soul has the capacity to think, feel and will:

Psa 103:2 *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits (mind)*

Mat 26:38 *My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death (emotion)*

20

Deu 14:26 *whatsoever your soul desires (will)*

The soul is the connection between body and spirit; one could say that it is orientated to both spheres of life: on the one side to our earthly life (the life in the flesh), and on the other towards God (the life in the spirit).

25

Deu 6:5 *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

c.) The soul is the subject of sin and the object of salvation

30 **Mat 16:26** *What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Lev 17:11 *...to make an atonement for your souls...*

35 Jesus Christ gave his soul for our salvation – now he expects from us to be ready to also give our souls wholly to him and to his cause.

Mar 10:45 *...but to serve, and to give his life [literally: his soul] as a ransom for many.*

40 **Act 15:26** *...men who have risked their lives [literally: their souls] for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

⁷⁰ In Hebrew: נֶפֶשׁ (nepheš).

⁷¹ In Greek: ψυχαὶ (psychai).

5. The heart

a.) The heart is the centre, the core

Centre of physical life:

5 **2Sa 18:14** *...so he took three javelins in his hand and plunged them into Absalom's heart...*

1Sa 25:37 *and his heart failed him and he became like a stone.*

10 The term *heart* (in Hebrew לֵב [*lēb*] or לֵבָב [*lēbāb*]) stands also for the centre of inanimate things:

Exo 15:8 *...the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.*

15 **Mat 12:40** *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

b.) The heart represents the innermost being of man

1Sa 16:7 *Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*

20 The goal of preaching in the Old Testament was to attend and appeal to the hearts of the listeners:

Joe 2:13 *And rend your heart and not your garments!*

1Pe 3:4 *...but let it be the hidden man of the heart...*

c.) The heart is the origin, the source of the life of the soul

25 Where we observe the driving power of the soul, we could also say *spirit*. Where it concerns the functions of the soul, we use the term *soul*.

Emotion:

30 **Deu 20:8** *Is any man afraid or fainthearted?*

Joh 14:1 *Do not let your hearts be troubled.*

35 **Eph 6:22** *...that he might comfort your hearts...*

Mind:

40 **Gen 6:5** *The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.*

Pro 16:9 *In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.*

Mat 15:19 *For out of the heart come evil thoughts...*

45 The heart is also able to speak:

Pro 23:33 *...and your heart shall utter perverse things.*

Therefore the mind is often mentioned together with the heart:

1Ki 3:9 *So give your servant a discerning [hearing] heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong.*

Real understanding is a matter of the heart:

Luk 2:19 *But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

Will:

What is in the heart presses towards action:

Deu 8:2 *...in order to know what was in your heart.*

2Sa 7:3 *...Whatever you have in your heart, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you.*

Heart and will melt together and become one:

Psa 20:4 *May he give you the desire of your heart.*

Psa 21:2 *You have granted him the desire of his heart...*

Act 5:4 *...why have you conceived this thing in your heart?*

God can guide the heart (will) of man:

Ezr 7:27 *Praise be to the LORD, the God of our fathers, who has put it into the king's heart...*

Rev 17:17 *For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose...*

But still, there is a distinction between the heart and the soul:

Notice that usually the heart is mentioned first – we assume because it is the source of the soul (or is it only an enumeration?):

Deu 6:5 *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. (cf. Mar 12:30)*

Pro 2:10 *For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.⁷²*

Act 4:32 *All the believers were one in heart and mind...*

As already mentioned above, the Old Testament has no specific word for conscience – it is there rather a function of the heart:

⁷² In the Hebrew text this is a beautiful parallelism.

Deu 8:5 *Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you.*

5 **Jos 14:7** *...and I brought him word again as it was in my heart.*

1Sa 24:6 *...afterward, David was conscience-stricken...*⁷³

10 **Job 27:6** *...my conscience (heart) will not reproach me as long as I live.*

Compare also with 1Jo 3:19-20.

d.) The heart is the centre of the religious life

The heart of unbelievers:

15 **Heb 3:12** *a sinful, unbelieving heart*

Therefore the expression **“hardening of heart”**:

20 **Exo 7:13** *Pharaoh's heart became hard*⁷⁴

Mar 6:52 *...their hearts were hardened.*

The heart of believers:

25 **Act 2:37** *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart.*

Act 16:14 *The Lord opened her heart.*

30 **Rom 10:9-10** *For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified...*

After conversion, the heart of the believers should become obedient to the Lord and to his Word:

Ezr 7:10 *Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it...*

35 **Psa 57:7(8)** *My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music.*

Pro 23:26 *My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to my ways*

40 Finally, we should have a firm heart:

Pro 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart...*

Act 11:23 *...he encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.*

⁷³ In Hebrew: **לִבְדָּוִד** (*[wayyak lēb Dāwid]* = and the heart of David was beating).

⁷⁴ The verb *hardening* in Hebrew (**חָזַק** = *chāzaq*) in Exo 7:22; 8:16; 9:35 with the root *Qal* (i.e. the heart hardened itself or it just remained hard); in Exo 8:28 und 9:34 it is clearly expressed that Pharaoh himself hardened his heart (made it heavy), because the verb **קָבַד** (*kābēd*) is formed in the (causative) *Hiphil*-stem (**וַיִּקְבֹּד** [*wayyakbēd*]: and he hardened [active!]). In Exo 9:7 we find the verb *kābēd* in *Qal*, i.e. the heart of Pharaoh remained hard by itself. After Exo 10:1 it is Yahweh who hardens the heart of Pharaoh and his people: in 10:1 *Hiphil* (causative) from the verb *kābēd* and in 10:20 and 11:10 in *Piel* (factitive) of the verb *chāzaq* (i.e. Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh...).

1Th 3:13 ...may he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless

Heb 13:9 ...it is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace...

5

The Bible speaks also of the heart of God:

Gen 6:6 and his heart was filled with pain.

10 **Gen 8:21** and he LORD said in his heart...

1Sa 13:14 the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart

1Ki 9:3 ...my eyes and my heart will always be there...

15

The heart always refers to the inner core of a matter, the middle, the centre, the essential. Mostly the word stands for the spiritual and psychological centre within man.

C. The physical/material nature of man

20 Speaking of the body, i.e. the physical aspect of man, it is important to distinguish between body and flesh:

The Greek words for these entities are:

body = *sōma* (τὸ σῶμα)

25

flesh = *sárx* (ἡ σὰρξ)

Based on Holy Scripture the relationship between *body* and *flesh* could be explained like this:

30 **Flesh** is the **animated substance**, while the **body** constitutes a wonderful **organism**, which man as a living soul (personality) uses to interact with the world (cf. 1Co 6:16). The body is more than flesh. 1Co 6:19 speaks of a special dignity of the body.

Psa 139:14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that very well.

35

1. The body of man

God created the physical form of Adam from the dust of the earth like a potter forms a vessel from clay.

a.) The natural body

40 If we study the many passages⁷⁵ that speak about the body (especially in the O. T.), we are startled at the fact that most of these speak about death. It seems like an investigation of a field of corpses:

⁷⁵ There are over 200!

Nah 3:3 ...many casualties, piles of dead, bodies without number...

5 The original splendour of the body, as it has come from the hand of the Creator, has been overshadowed by the dominion of death. Even though the subject of sin is not the body but the soul⁷⁶ the body is spoken of as the **“body of sin”** (cf. Rom 6:6; this stands in contrast to 1Co 6:19, where Paul says that the body of the believer is a **temple of the Holy Spirit**).

b.) The body of the born again man

This body is still always a **“psychic”** body, i.e. **it has not yet been redeemed/saved**:

10 **Rom 8:23** we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

But in these earthen (made of clay) vessel a heavenly treasure is hidden:

15 **2Co 4:7** But we have this treasure in jars of clay...

It is the temple of the Holy Spirit:

20 **1Co 6:19** Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?

Temple and divine service go together (→ against Gnosticism). Worship and service cannot be thought of without each other:

25 **1Co 6:20** Therefore honour God with your body.

Also sacrifice is an integral part of worship and service:

30 **Rom 12:1** ...to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.

This sacrifice refers of course to the parts of our body:

35 **Heb 13:15** Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess his name.

Heb 13:16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

40 **Service** is an integral part of worship. At the same time we must not forget, that we still bear a **“body of sin”** therefore it says:

Rom 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body...

45 **Rom 8:13** ...but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live

Positively expressed, we are called to:

⁷⁶ The body is always “only” an instrument.

Rom 6:19 *Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.*

- 5 In the Bible separate parts of the body are enumerated and it states in which way they can be used to the glory of God:

Some examples:

| | | |
|----|----------------|----------------------|
| 10 | Eyes: | Psa 25:15 |
| | Ears: | Isa 50:4 |
| | Mouth: | Rom 10:10 |
| | Lips: | Psa 51:17; Heb 13:15 |
| | Tongue: | Psa 51:16; Jam 3:1ff |
| 15 | Hands: | 1Ti 2:8; Heb 12:12 |
| | Knees: | Heb 12:12 |
| | Feet: | Isa 52:7 |

- 20 Going the way of the majority of mankind, the main goal of life would be the greatest possible satisfaction of our physical desires. The body is given greater importance than the soul and/or the spirit. This is also a reason why the world hates and opposes Christian ethics (cf. 1Pe 4:2-4).

- 25 So it is of special importance that we teach and preach what the Holy Scriptures say concerning our bodies. Many believers (this may be more applicable to the younger generation) are not living victorious lives, because they have not dedicated their body to the Lord. In this regard we often lack good role models in our churches. This constitutes a great challenge for us. In the following we enumerate three areas of our every-day-lives that are related to our bodies:

- 30 **Eating and drinking:** 1Co 10:31; Phi 3:18-19:

- In which way did sin come into the world? “...*you are free to eat . . . you must not eat!*” (cf. Gen 2:16-17). Observe also the attitude of Isaac (his sole concern seemed to be, that Esau prepares a good meal for him), Esau (he sells the right of the firstborn for a meal of lentils), Noah and Lot (consequences of drunkenness) etc.

- 35 The abuse of alcohol causes much suffering and misery. In the western (rich) world excess in eating (*bulimia* = *overeating* etc.) causes serious health problems (overweight, high blood pressure).

- 40 **Clothing:** cf. 1Ti 2:9-10; 1Pe 3:3-5:

- The Bible shows for instance that women especially are in danger of putting too much value on their outward appearance; at the same time forgetting that beauty of the inward being is more important than the outward being (i.e. the body). It hardly needs to be mentioned that many women consciously dress in a way to attract the attention of (poor and weak 🙄 😊 😞) men.

- Sexuality:**

- 50 The sin most often mentioned in the Bible is undoubtedly sexual aberration in its different forms. Many individual people as well as nations or tribes perished because of sexual aberrations. Thinking of the many divorces in our modern times (for many children involved, a real trauma), of polygamy (i.e. in Islam and in many traditional tribes), of prostitution, group-sex-orgies,

homosexuality⁷⁷ and paedophilia or even sexual connections to animals⁷⁸ etc. Certain sexually transmitted diseases (like [more in olden times] syphilis and [in recent times] aids) have decimated and even destroyed whole people groups.

5 **1Co 6:20** *Therefore honour God with your body!*

Impulse for thought:

This *lowly body* (cf. Phi 3:21) is **the seed for our spiritual/glorified body**.

10

1Co 15:44 *...it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (cf. 1Co 15:53)*

Our bodies and our lives in this body have a great calling. Correspondingly our responsibility concerning the body is great indeed; we shall have to give an account:

15

2Co 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether it be good or bad.*

20 **2. The flesh**

a.) The flesh is in its first instance the material basis for the outer nature of man

Indeed *“the dust of the earth”*, out of which God created the flesh of Adam, contains the very same chemical substances and minerals as the flesh and the bones of contemporary man. But the flesh of man (and of animal) is animated substance. The dust of the earth only became flesh at the moment when it was brought to life by the breath of God.

25

Gen 2:23 *bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.*

30 **1Co 15:50** *...that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*

b.) The flesh is the seat of human weakness

The physical nature is “the weak point” of (fallen) man. It reminds him of his transient character as well as of his need of regeneration:

35 **Isa 40:6** *All flesh is (like) grass*

Mat 26:41 *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*

c.) Flesh is referring to the whole of the fallen body

Man is called as such *“flesh”*:

40

⁷⁷ If one dares in these days to call these matters sin, one is increasingly charged with intolerance and exclusiveness (but see Gen 19:5ff; Lev 18:22ff; Jdg 19:22ff; 1Co 6:9).

⁷⁸ Compare to Lev 18:23.

Rom 7:18 *I know that no good thing lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature (literally: in my flesh)...*

The flesh is all in me that rebels against God. Spirit, soul and body are separated from their original created harmony:

1Pe 2:11 *abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.*

Gal 5:17 *For the sinful nature (the flesh) desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.*

Our flesh can oppose the life in the Spirit in two ways: (1) by violating the commandments of God; (2) by our own efforts to do good works, trying to be saved by our own power:

It will hardly be necessary to explain the first point (violation of God's commandments). However many people (often also Christians) are not aware of the second danger; i.e. trying to please God through their own works and efforts! We cite in this connection the following explicit passage:

Gal 3:3 *After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?⁷⁹*

If we act in this way, we are substituting the Holy Spirit by ourselves. In Rom 8:6-8 we are told, what God thinks about our flesh (our self-made efforts).

The way from the servitude of the flesh to freedom leads us through death and resurrection. Let us read attentively Rom 6:2-5 and 8:3. When we have died and risen (spiritually speaking) with Christ, then we are able to overcome the flesh in the power of the Holy Spirit:

Gal 5:24 *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.*

More concerning this subject: in our chapter on *Sanctification through the Spirit* in our brochure on *Pneumatology*.

D. The unity of the human personality

Man was created by God as a "harmonious whole". Spirit, soul and body collaborated together:

Man is equipped with a threefold knowledge (or a threefold consciousness):

1. Consciousness of God
2. Consciousness of self
3. Consciousness of environment

Man was created in the first instance to live in fellowship with his Creator. But if man wants to live in relationship with God, his (man's) spirit must be enabled to have communion with God's Spirit.

⁷⁹ In the context of Galatians 3, Paul is reprimanding the believers in Galatia because they are again trying to please God by their own legalistic observance of the Mosaic Law instead of sanctification through grace in the Holy Spirit.

Through his spirit (the spirit of man) it is possible for man to know God and divine matters, i.e. to receive spiritual input. This capacity may be called *God-consciousness*.

5 The *soul* which connects *spirit* and *body* gives individuality to man, the character of his being. The soul as the seat of the ability of mind, emotion and will is the centre or rather the seat of the human being. Through the soul man has *self-consciousness*.

10 Man lives in a material universe. It is therefore necessary to have a connection to the material world. Through his five senses (the senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting), which are part of the human body, man is aware of the world around him: *environment-consciousness* is possible through the human body.

1. The unity of body and soul

a.) Through the body the soul is able to receive (import)

15 The *“import”* of the life of the soul (psychological) takes place through the channels of the five senses.⁸⁰ The process of realisation through the senses could be schematised in the following way:

1. Outward stimulus: physical process (i.e.: light meets the eye).
- 20 2. Sensation: Physical transfer to the centre, where all stimulation is assimilated, i.e. in the brain and in the spine.
3. Awareness: Psychological process (→ perception).

25 Each stimulus is differentiated from the other and localised. The convergence between body and soul is interesting. What is initially a physical and mechanical process becomes a psychic awareness (perception). This perception serves as mediator to attain concept and imagination.

4. Imagination; concept: After concluding the physical stimulus a concept (or rather an imagination of one's perception) becomes possible.

30 b.) Through the body the soul can express itself (export)

The soul wants to express itself to the outside:

- I think: and I want to say it.
- I feel: and I want to show it.
- 35 I want: and I need to act.

This is the *“export”* of the soul. The body offers to the soul wonderful possibilities of expression:

- 40 Eyes: The windows of the soul
- Voice: Words, song, weeping, laughing...
- Limbs: Differentiated movements
- Nerves: Gestures

⁸⁰ In this sense the five senses could be compared to entrance-doors.

The body is not the prison of the soul,⁸¹ but rather an instrument which allows the soul to express itself.⁸²

c.) Mutual relationship between soul and body

Psychosomatic relation/connection:

5 (1) The influence of the body upon the soul

The body is not only the instrument of the “imports” and “exports” of the soul; rather it may (in reverse) have influence upon the soul. Apparently certain diseases of the lungs can have a stimulating effect upon the life of the soul by triggering a tendency towards activism. Other diseases may have the opposite effect, i.e. the soul is depressed: so for instance caused by disorder in the stomach and/or intestines or abdominal sickness. It is important for the counsellor at least to know about these connections. This does not mean that one needs to be a medically trained expert to give pastoral care in counselling. It is helpful to know that psychological or spiritual problems are sometimes caused by physical ailments. Not all people react to physical sickness in the same way.

15 **1. Dominance of the body over the soul:** the person concerned risks (is in danger) to be thrown out of balance by each physical problem.

20 **2. Dominance of the soul over the body:** the affected person is to a certain extent in control of the body. When a limit (pain barrier) is exceeded, the sick person (e.g. a Stoic) risks losing his/her self-control.

25 **3. Dominance of the spirit:** “*My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*” (Ps. 73:26). This kind of self-control is probably only possible for the believer to whom the Spirit of God gives supernatural power, so that suffering can be endured (cp. 1Co 10:13).

(2) Influence of the soul upon the body

As the body may influence the soul, so the reverse is also possible: the soul may affect the body. Often bodily changes or even sickness may have their root in psychological processes or problems. Physicians are concerned in the first instance with the human body, while psychologists deal with the human soul. Science has long since become aware, that man must be considered and treated as a whole. If this fact is ignored, there is the risk of false diagnoses.

35 The Bible confirms that there is a connection between soul and body: see for instance Psa 32:3-4; 51:10; 52:10 (David). A true cure of such a sickness is neither possible through medicine nor through psychotherapy. There are sicknesses and diseases which need a spiritual treatment:

Psa 62:8(9) ...pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge... (cf. 1Co 11:28-32)

40 If man is not able to unload his deepest sickness before God, it can lead to serious psychological problems. If the spirit of man lives in relation to God, a relief to the soul – and with that also of the body – is possible. Once the soul finds a valve of release, by which the pressure (the problem) is released, then the body also will be relieved.

⁸¹ This is claimed by Platonism, Neo-Platonism, Buddhism and other philosophies and human conceptions.

⁸² The same applies to the spirit of man.

Mat 11:28

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

5 In industrial nations (i.e. specially in rich countries) there is an extreme increase of psychological diseases. Stress, worries (compare with Phi 4:6; 1Pe 5:7) and other factors play a role in this.

10 In countries and cultures where **magical practices** play an important role, it may happen that people complain of pains, where the physician cannot find a medical (physical) explanation. If one gains a deeper insight into the life of the particular person, it may be discovered, that this person has been involved in magical practices (acquiring some fetish, etc.). How can such problems be addressed and treated?

15 1. **Secular, unbelieving man** will seek help for his problem, first from the physician and then from the psychiatrist. Concerning problems of a psychological nature, he normally assumes, the psychological problem is the consequence of a bad education, the environment, the society or some other unfortunate circumstances. Secular man does not recognise in the deepest sense the factor of *sin* (against God and man). Because he rejects the Word of God as norm/standard for life, he also knows no guilt before his Creator. So he will not seek a solution through the avenue of faith. To the unbeliever the psychiatrist will recommend, to forget the problem or its causes and to “sublimate” it. At best, he will be advised to reconcile with his neighbour (i.e. opponent, enemy, etc.). Where to find the necessary strength and motivation for this move, remains an open question. Medicine and psychiatry may often be useful and very helpful in diagnosis, but in problems of a spiritual dimension, they cannot really help.

25 2. **The solution of the believer:** Where neither physician nor psychiatrist can help, the believer has the possibility to find help in prayer and in pastoral counselling. The Bible says that man is responsible before God and his fellow man. Often the cause of a problem is sin.⁸³ While a psychotherapist, who does not include belief in God in his therapy, cannot “offer” a real solution to the problem, a biblically orientated psychotherapist or counsellor (i.e. a pastor) may point the patient helpfully to the possibility of forgiveness through genuine repentance in Jesus Christ. We are reminded of the words of Jesus:

Joh 3:7

You should not be surprised at my saying, You must be born again.

35 The goal of Christian counselling should be Jesus Christ. Simplified (without generalisation – because there are also Christian psychiatrists) the tension between Christian counselling and psychotherapy may be portrayed in the following way:

Christian counselling:**Psychotherapy:**

40

➤ Man is by nature a fallen creature
i.e. a sinner.

In his inner core man is basically good.⁸⁴

45

➤ His crisis is a consequence of a
wrong position before God.

His crisis results from a wrong position
before human society.

➤ Man needs to turn to God and chose
Jesus Christ as goal of his life.

Man needs to find a new orientation to
continue his life according to new ideals.

⁸³ Cp. 1Co 11:28-32. It is essential to observe that not every sickness can be traced back to a personal sin: cf. Joh 9:1-3. Many problems exist or come into existence, because since the fall the whole world (i.e. the whole creation) is under the dominion of sin and is therefore transient and mortal.

⁸⁴ This is probably one of the greatest errors of humanism. It dates back to the Greek philosopher Socrates (469-399 B.C.)

In many cases psychotherapy may be helpful, but if the problem is of a spiritual nature, psychotherapy cannot offer in the last analysis a real solution, except if the treating therapist or physician is a Christian who applies biblical principle. It also happens that a believing patient asks his (unbelieving) psychiatrist for extra, (cross-council) advice from his pastor. Here the following conditions need to be observed: (1) The psychiatrist in question must be willing for co-operation with the pastor of the patient; (2) The patient needs to give the psychiatrist or physician expressly the authorisation to take council with his pastor, since the physician is bound to professional discretion.

2. Soul and spirit

a.) Influence of the soul upon the spirit

What the body is for the soul, the soul is for the spirit. Through the soul the world influences the spirit of man (**import**) and through the soul the spirit can express itself (**export**). Through things which affect the soul we can either nourish our spirit or weaken it or even cause it to become sick. The soul is the *entrance-door* to the human spirit: it is the eye, ear and mouth of the spirit. The book we read, the words we hear and the pictures we see are not only influencing our soul, but even reach the spirit (cf. Psa 119:11; 2Co 7:1).

Our soul is continually engaged. The soul passes all impressions on to the spirit. Only the spirit of the believer will react as a servant to the Holy Spirit and so reign over the soul. It will be guided by emotion as they were (and still are) in Christ and will therefore react in a spiritual way. When necessary, it will even oppose the soul. The “no” of the spirit may oppose the soul. The spirit does not necessarily sympathise with the soul. The soul is imbalanced, but the regenerated spirit, thanks to the presence of the Holy Spirit, is balanced (apropos, unshakable and balanced: compare 1Co 15:58; Heb 13:9).

If the soul gives in to the will of the flesh, there arises a conflict between soul and spirit, as well as between the spirit and the flesh (cf. Gal 5:17).

b.) The influence of the spirit upon the soul

The soul can be a wonderful instrument through which the renewed (regenerated) spirit of the believer expresses itself. A human spirit which does not stand in relation to God can have devastating influence upon the soul. The soul may be sick or become sick, because it is not satisfied (*apathy* or *lust*).

It is like this: the members of the body are either the instruments of a *dead spirit* or they are the tools of a human spirit which is regenerated by the Holy Spirit (compare Rom 6:19).

The mouth: “For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Mat 12:34)

The face reflects what is in the heart (cf. Exo 34:29; Psa 5:10; Pro 15:13; 2Co 3:18).

The hands are directed by the will of the heart: Eve took, Cain killed, Achan stole, Jacob blessed.

With the new birth (regeneration) there begins a cooperation between the Holy Spirit and the renewed spirit of born again man. At the moment when an individual opens him/herself to the Lord

and so lives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this “*new being*”, the life of the spirit through the soul to the body will come into effect: the change of the whole life style:

- 5 **Gal 4:19** *until Christ is formed in you*
- 2Co 3:18** *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*
- 10 Our identification with Christ will grow. Our thoughts, feelings and our will should be ruled by the Spirit of God.
- Gal 2:20** *...Christ lives in me...*
- 15 Now it is no more the soul with its “*Ego*” at the centre, but rather Christ himself.

III. THE FALL OF MAN

This chapter addresses the greatest catastrophe of human history. We have seen in the first chapter that Adam is the father of the whole human race. Through natural procreation we are all descendants of the first man. Adam sinned already before he fathered his first son. So it happens that all humans are born as sinners. The question is: how did Adam become a sinner? We have to deal with the prehistory of the fall (into sin) and some of the associated questions and problems.

Thiessen says:

Before one can understand the fall of man, two other subjects, the law of God and the nature of sin, must be considered. We need to know about the law of God in order to understand the transgression of it, which was sin; and we need to know about the nature of sin in order to understand its origin in Adam and Eve.⁸⁵

In fact, where there is no law (commandment), there is also no transgression (cf. Rom 4:15) and therefore no fall. We follow here Thiessen, who introduces his chapter on the fall with an excursus about the law of God. Following in essence the *exposé* of Thiessen,⁸⁶ we add in several places further comments and point to additional and other scriptural passages.

A. The law of God

A law is, generally speaking, an expression of power. This implies a lawgiver, a subject, an expression of will and the power to assert this will. Terms like: *laws of nature*, *laws of the mind* etc., are contradictions in themselves if they are used to denote a mode of action or an order of sequence behind which there is conceived to be no ordering will and enforcing power.⁸⁷ A law is not *per se* (in itself) effective to be the cause of anything; it presupposes a lawgiver and it describes the way according to which this lawgiver operates.

1. The meaning of the law of God

The law of God is in particular the expression of his will enforced by his power. It has two forms: *the elemental law* and *the positive enactment*. The *elemental law* is a law inherent in the elements, substances, and powers of rational and irrational creatures. There are laws of a *material*, *natural* or *physical* type and laws of *moral* type. The natural law deals with the material universe. It is not essential in an absolute way, because a different order would also be conceivable. Nor is natural law an end in itself; it exists for the sake of the moral order. Therefore, the physical (natural) order has only a relative constancy.

⁸⁵ Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 168.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-175.

⁸⁷ By the way, this also argues against the theory of evolution which excludes God as the origin of everything.

God supplements this order occasionally by miracles.⁸⁸ **Moral law** relates to the constitution of rational and free, i.e. responsible beings. It implies a lawgiver, a free moral subject, power to enforce the command, obligation on the part of the subject to obey, and sanctions in case of disobedience. This law is an expression of the moral nature of God and allows the conclusion that the normal condition of man is such that he lives in total agreement (conformity) with this holy nature (cf. Mat 5:48; 1Pe 1:16).

Therefore it is evident that the law of God is not arbitrary, since it springs from his nature; it is not temporary (limited in time); it has not been created or thought of to meet an exigency (e.g. a crisis-situation); it is not merely negative but also positive in that it demands positive conformity to God; it is not partial, because it does not address only a part of man's being. It relates to man's outer nature (body) as well as to his inner nature (soul/spirit). It is not outwardly published (written down with letters), but that positive enactment is only the expression of this unwritten law of being, it is not limited to consciousness of it but exists whether its existence is recognised or not. It is not limited to a particular locality or class of people but includes all moral creatures.

Positive law (enactment) is the expression of God's will in published ordinances. These consist of his definitely moral precepts, such as the Decalogue (cf. Exo 20:1-17). All those commandments are repeated and confirmed⁸⁹ in the New Testament with exception of the Sabbath-law. These ordinances also include the ceremonial legislation (laws) which includes regulations concerning the offerings or sacrifices (Lev 1-7), the laws concerning the priesthood (Lev 8-10), and the laws of purity and purification (Lev 11-15). These laws are temporary (limited to a certain time), but only God can decree how long they are binding. The period during which a law is in force varies. Some laws are rooted in the being (or rather in the nature) of God himself and have therefore eternal validity (cp. Mat 22:37-40; 1Jo 5:20). Others are founded upon the permanent relations of men to each other in their present state of existence (cp. Eph 6:1) or conditions of society (cp. Eph 6:5). Others again are positive laws, deriving their authority from the explicit commands of God. Numbered among these are ceremonial laws concerning sacrifices, circumcision, etc.

2. The purpose of the law of God

Negatively expressed, the law was not given as a means whereby man might be saved. Paul states: *"For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law"* (Gal 3:21). It could not (and cannot) make alive, because *"it was weak through the flesh."*⁹⁰ (Rom. 8:3). Passages in which life is promised to those, who keep the law (cf. Lev 18:5; Neh 9:29; Ezr 18:5-9; Mat 19:17; Rom 7:10; 10:5; Gal 3:12) speak in an idealistic and hypothetical way, as if man had not the nature of flesh and so were able to do God's will. Since, however, man is a slave to his own ego⁹¹ he cannot keep God's law (Rom 8:7), and, consequently, neither life nor righteousness is possible by the law.

Positively expressed, the law was given to intensify man's knowledge (and awareness) of sin, to reveal the holiness of God, and to lead the sinner to Christ. Through the testimony of the conscience, man knows that he is a sinner, but by the published law of God he comes to an intensified *"knowledge of sin"* (cf. Rom 3:19-20; 7:7). Sin now takes on the form of transgression (cf. Rom 5:13; 7:13). Paul says: *"Indeed I would not have come to know sin except through the law."* (Rom 7:7). He is not saying thereby that he had not known sin in any sense, but that he had

⁸⁸ Examples: the flood, the confusion of languages, the ten plagues against Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, healings and resurrections from the dead in the Old and New Testament, etc.

⁸⁹ Yes, even heightened in the saying of Jesus *"but I say to you..."* in Mat 5:28.32.34.39.44; 19:9 etc.

⁹⁰ This is the case because the flesh is under the dominion of sin and therefore unable to fulfil the exigencies of the law.

⁹¹ Compare with the Latin expression *servum arbitrium* (the enslaved [i.e. not free] will): man is the slave of sin and therefore incapable (in his own strength) to choose the good.

not known it as exceedingly sinful. The law was also given to reveal the holiness of God (Rom 7:12). The nature of the commandments shows this, but ceremonies, rituals, the tabernacle with its outer court, the holy place and the most holy place as well as the mediation of the priesthood were intended to show the holiness of God. Only under certain preconditions, certain persons were allowed to approach God on certain occasions. The ceremonial law sets forth visibly the holiness of God. And, finally, the law was given to lead men to Christ. Christ was the end of the law for righteousness (Rom 10:4), but he is also its aim (Greek: τέλος [*télos*]). Paul calls the law “*our tutor [schoolmaster] to bring us to Christ*” (Gal 3:24). The law served in like fashion to prepare those under it for the reception of Christ. It did this by revealing God's holiness and man's sinfulness as well as by its sacrifices, priesthood and tabernacle, which point to the cross of Christ as the only way of salvation and access to the Father.

3. The relation of the believer to the law of God

The relation of believers to the law in our present time shows a marked difference to the same in the past. Holy Scripture teaches that through the death of Christ we are not only freed from the curse of the law (cf. Gal 3:13), i.e. from condemnation pronounced and imposed by the law, but freed from the law itself (Rom 7:4; Eph 2:14ff; Col 2:14). At Calvary Christ became the end of the law unto righteousness (cf. Rom 10:4). The words of the apostle Paul in 2Co 3:7-11 make it clear that this includes the moral as well as the ceremonial law. That *which was engraved in letters on stone* (2Co 3:7) and *which passes away* (2Co 3:11), certainly refers to the *Ten Commandments*. Therefore we are told that the believer is not “*under the law, but under grace*” (Rom 6:14; 7:6; Gal 4:30; 5:18), and he is exhorted as follows: “*Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery*” (Gal 5:1). All this shows clearly that Paul does not distinguish between the ceremonial and the moral portions of the Old Testament law.

The believer has been liberated from the law, but liberty does not mean *free ticket* in the sense of “*everything is permitted*” (cf. **libertinism** and 1Co 6:12ff; 10:23). To offset this danger of antinomianism⁹² and to guard against it, Scripture teaches us, that we are not only set free from the law, but we *now belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God* (Rom 7:4).

We are therefore “***not without the law, but under the law of Christ***” (1Co 9:21; see also Gal 6:2). *Being liberated from the law* should not lead us to *Libertinism* (→ *Epicureanism, Hedonism*), but to Christian love (cf. Gal 5:13; 1Pe 2:16). The believer should therefore focus his attention on Jesus, his example, his Master and with the help of the Holy Spirit follow his laws and commandments (Rom 8:4; Gal 5:18).⁹³ This does not mean that the precepts of the Decalogue which are grounded in the character of God have no authority today. An attentive study of Holy Scripture reveals that all commandments of the Decalogue, except the fourth, i.e. the Sabbath-law, are reaffirmed in the New Testament (see above). They are repeated for our instruction as to what the will of the Lord is, but not as precepts that we must observe and keep in order to become righteous before God. This would be useless, because, as Paul says: “*no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law*” (Rom 3:20). The believer of this age (or dispensation) has received the adoption of sons, and with this the mind of the Spirit (cf. 2Co 1:22; 5:5; Gal 4:5ff; Eph 1:14). Through the Spirit we have been delivered from the law of sin and death (cf. Rom 8:2), and through the Spirit we are to produce the “*fruit of the Spirit*” (cf. Gal 5:22ff; Eph 5:9).

⁹² Hostile attitude against the Law (in our context against the Law of Moses). Especially at the time of the great reformers and after them *antinomianism* constituted an extreme reaction against Catholicism. Catholicism preached too often salvation through good works, to which antinomians reacted with a rejection of all kinds of legalism and the “preaching of the law”. There were extremists among them, who went so far, to call good works, sin. Among other errors, antinomians often did not understand the message of the letter of James (chapter 2: faith without works is dead).

⁹³ See the chapter concerning the *sanctification in [or through] the Holy Spirit* in our brochure on *Pneumatology*.

B. The fall and the problems connected with it

Have you ever heard the following (or similar) questions: *Why did God give a command, a law to man?* Without this law, man would not have become a sinner! *Why did God plant this tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden?* If it had not been there, man would not have sinned. If man had not been tempted by Satan, he might never have sinned. *Why did God cast Satan upon the earth and not to some other place?* God, who is omniscient, knew beforehand, that man would sin. If God is a God of love, why did he not prevent the fall of man? One could continue to enlist questions of this kind, as they are often posed. Holy Scripture – we believe – gives answers to most of these questions, however others will remain a mystery – at least while we exist in this life.

1. Where does evil come from?

This question already preoccupied the philosophers of the antique world. Various efforts at explanation, which contradict the Holy Scriptures in one or the other way, were offered in the course of time. Here are some of them:⁹⁴

1. **Pessimistic systems**, as certain religions (e.g. **Buddhism**) or philosophers (like the German **Schopenhauer** [1788-1860]) explain evil in the world with a general tendency towards evil, inherent in the world itself. The actual existence of the world is bad and the cause of all evil. The Bible claims the opposite: in the beginning everything was *very good* (Gen 1:31).
2. **Dualisms**: Certain Gnostics and Manicheans (Manichaeism⁹⁵) advocate a cosmic dualism. According to this concept, there always were two mutually independent principles opposing each other and going on to do so in all eternity: **Good** and **evil** or **light** and (or *against*) **darkness**. As in Gnosticism, matter is considered to be evil.⁹⁶ This concept limits God in that it denies his omnipotence, because it assumes the existence of another power, which opposes him and which, supposedly, he cannot overcome. According to this opinion, evil (and with that sin) has always been a part of nature:⁹⁷ Evil then would be seen as natural and not a moral evil at all. This system implies ultimately, that man is not responsible for evil and sin in the world.
3. Certain Greek (Hellenistic) philosophers (e.g. **Gnosticism**, **Neo-Platonism**) claim, that the soul is a prisoner of the body; the latter is evil because it consists of matter. Therefore they advise an ascetic life-style (an abstemious and renouncing way of life: i.e. avoiding certain food and abstaining from sex), and so to make it (allegedly) possible for the soul, to be lifted up to God (called the **Absolute**) and be again united to him.⁹⁸
4. Others think that sin is a consequence of our limited character. The fall was therefore an unavoidable consequence of the limitations of the human being.⁹⁹ This understanding minimises the responsibility of man in respect to sin. Actually it encourages man, to seek the cause for the fall with his Creator, i.e. to shift the blame upon God.

⁹⁴ We believe that only the seventh position stands in harmony with Holy Scripture.

⁹⁵ Followers of Mani, born in Persia (died around 276 A.D.). Mani tried to construct an amalgamation of Christianity, Parsism (Zoroastrianism) and Hellenistic Gnosticism (a kind of syncretistic world-religion). Manichaeism had spread widely from Iran to Italy, Spain and North Africa. Augustine, before his conversion, was a Manichaean.

⁹⁶ Later the *Cathars* were influenced by this concept.

⁹⁷ And this speaks against the statement in Gen 1:31.

⁹⁸ Paul possibly hints with his words in Col 2:18ff and 1Ti 4:1-5 at some such concepts.

⁹⁹ The philosopher Leibniz went into this direction. He spoke of the imperfection of finiteness; this also applies to Thomism (the teaching of Thomas Aquinas [1225-1274]). Compare Henri Blocher, *La doctrine du péché et de la rédemption*, nouvelle édition révisée et augmentée (Vaux-sur-Seine, France: Edifac, 1997), I, p. 15 and Henry Clarence Thiessen, op. cit., p. 179.

5. The concept of *dialectic* assumes a positive nature of evil: The German philosopher and mystic with pantheistic tendencies, **Jakob Boehme** (1575-1624), believed, that good as well as evil have their origin in God.¹⁰⁰ He supported the idea of positivism in evil: the fascination of a sunbeam becomes distinct, when it shines into a dark room. Darkness allows the light to manifest itself. Doubtless the most famous dialectic was the German philosopher **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel** (1770-1831).¹⁰¹ He founded an *absolute idealism*, being influenced himself by the thinking of Jakob Boehme and especially by the Greek pantheist **Heraclites** (550-480 B.C.); the latter said: *“everything is in motion!”* (*panta rei*). According to Heraclites everything (i.e. the whole universe) is constantly in motion. This motion results from the opposition between two different conditions in matter. For Hegel it is the absolute spirit that is constantly in motion and repeatedly opposes itself. This thesis is followed by an antithesis; and the synthesis of this confrontation forms a new thesis, which is again opposed by the absolute spirit (antithesis). The result of this is a new synthesis, which again becomes a thesis, etc. God then opposes himself. The self-realisation of the absolute takes place in a dialectic way through contradiction. According to this concept, evil is a necessity for God. The absolute spirit is in constant motion, it develops continuously as it opposes itself in a dialectic way. The absolute spirit causes that that, which was not, comes into existence; that, which was, ceases to be; and that, which is, will no longer exist. Man is placed somewhere in the midst of this process of self-realisation. Everything is in motion, i.e. in the process of coming into being. One nation (thesis) opposes another nation (antithesis). The latter (antithesis) eliminates the former (thesis). Out of this arises another (new one), which is stronger than the previous ones. So evil has its place in this process of evolution of the absolute spirit. Evil then is necessary, even useful and conducive. If the synthesis is always seen as a progress; then evil may be viewed as a positive element. In this concept one can speak of the ‘positive evil’. In this dialectic process, evil is almost indispensable. Many theologians were (and still are) influenced by this deceiving and disastrous concept. It contradicts the biblical message. In Scripture, evil is a scandal in the eyes of God, whereas in this dialectical system, evil becomes a *“felix culpa”* (a happy guilt/fault), which (allegedly) contributes, so that something better comes into being.¹⁰² It is hardly necessary to point to the fact that the evolutionists were (and still are) inspired by this philosophy: the process of evolution from the simple to the complex through selection! Weakness (or weak *persons!*) is eliminated by strength (or the stronger *one!*)!¹⁰³ It is unfortunate that even “Christian” theologians agree with this concept. The already mentioned, well known Catholic scholar Teilhard de Chardin, a supporter of Darwinian evolutionary theory, said, that in the process of creation, evil mutates into a factor of progress, a “super-evolution”!¹⁰⁴
6. **Deterministic** conceptions¹⁰⁵ (*Predestination* or *Pre-determinism*): The so-called (Calvinistic) Supralapsarianism teaches, that the fall (and as such, evil) was included in the eternal decrees

¹⁰⁰ God is the *author* of evil and good, the beginning and end of all being.

¹⁰¹ He is probably (unfortunately!) the philosopher, who had (and in part still has) the deepest influence on so-called modern theology.

¹⁰² Biblical passages like Gen 50:20 cannot justify the concept of a positive evil. In Gen 50:20 it is explicitly said, that God turned into good, where man had wanted to do evil. The evil which has been turned into good by God, does not originate in God, but rather in the thoughts of Joseph’s brothers.

¹⁰³ Incidentally: It is said, that Adolph Hitler was influenced by the thoughts of Hegel and Darwin. Is it possible to comprehend the train of thought? Basically quite simple: a nation (antithesis) eliminates a whole other nation (which existed before itself: thesis), a race (e.g. the Jews), so that a stronger and more glorious power (i.e. the Nazi-kingdom) may arise (synthesis). And because the absolute spirit causes that what was, no longer exists, it follows that memories of gas chambers can be wiped away with a sponge... as if these atrocities had never taken place! One may forgive us for using such a macabre illustration, because we use it with an “honourable” aim..., namely, to show, where (and how far) such a view may lead. Henri Blocher, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 18, rightly points to the fact that none of the instigators of the dialectical systems would have embraced the principle of *sola scriptura* (*the scripture only*) in the evangelical sense.

¹⁰⁴ Cited by Henri Blocher, op. cit., vol. I: pp. 15f (“En régime de genèse, le mal se mue en facteur de progrès, de « sur-évolution ».”).

¹⁰⁵ Supralapsarianism (or *Antelapsarianism*) (cf. S. 83ff *excursion* concerning the different positions on questions of predestination and the free will) teaches, that God decreed (ordered, appointed) firstly, from before eternity, that some

of God, to manifest his grace and righteousness. Coming from the logical principle, that the one who decrees is also responsible for that which he decrees, we believe that every kind of *determinism* (i.e. *pre-determinism*)¹⁰⁶ takes the origin of evil ultimately back to God. In short: God would be himself the originator of evil. Holy Scripture claims radically the opposite. Here are some passages: Jam 1:13-17; 1Jo 1:5; 1Ti 6:16; Rev 21:27; 22:3; Isa 6:1ff. Added to that: According to Mat 25:41, God has prepared hell only for the devil and his angels and not for man. Men are not predestined for hell. God wants that all men should be saved.¹⁰⁷ Those who wilfully reject the grace offered in Jesus Christ are lost (more to that below, i.e. the different positions concerning *predestination* and *the free will*).

7. Sin (or evil) in the world has its origin in the **free act of the first man** (Adam): This position is held by most evangelical Christians (and theologians). Adam and Eve were created without sin as free moral beings with the capacity to decide to sin or not to sin. Man was not created like a robot, machine or automaton¹⁰⁸ to glorify God without a free will (capacity to decide). To be created in the image of God, means to be a moral being. A being that cannot take a free choice is not a moral being; it would rather be a marionette. Calvinists oppose the principle of a free choice, i.e. the free will.¹⁰⁹ Henri Blocher, an infralapsarian¹¹⁰ Calvinist (i.e. predestinarian), challenges the position which presupposes a free will in man, in that (like others too) it makes God the originator of evil. He says: if it were correct to see evil as a possibility inherent in freedom, we would give it a status in creation (Blocher calls this “l’être virtuel” = *the virtual being*). Because, he says, something described as inherent to a creature (indwelling, sticking to it) cannot simply be called a “nothing”. In that case, the Creator, who is responsible for all created characters, would also be the potential¹¹¹ cause of evil. Or one could claim, trying to excuse God, that he could not have created freedom in any other way. But then (so Blocher objects), one would presuppose a necessity outside of God, which in turn forces God himself. Or (so Blocher continues), one connects the virtual evil, which is inherent (indwelling) in freedom, within the nature of God himself; but then God would be compromised with evil.

men are appointed unto eternal life and others unto eternal condemnation; and only then (afterwards) he has decreed to create them. This view is also called **twofold predestination**. This concept may shock some Christians, but one should not forget the main motive of the exponents of this hypothesis which is noble: to support the biblical doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Supralapsarianists argue in the following way: God is only sovereign, if all that takes place is also decreed by him. If one single incident occurs, which is not decreed by himself – so they say – then God is no more sovereign. If something exists or takes place independent from God, then God (so their conclusion) is not absolutely sovereign. Therefore (so the argument) God must have decreed evil also. To avoid the conclusion, that the origin of evil goes back to God, they claim simply, that God has decreed the good things in an efficient (creative) way, and evil only in a permissive (*allowing something*) way. To explicate this, Supralapsarianists use the following Latin terms: “*efficaciter volens*” (efficient [*working*] willing [that this or that takes place...]) for all the good things which God has decreed and “*permissioniter volens*” (permissive [*allowing*] willing [that this or that takes place]) for the entering and origin of evil. We will not hide, that these arguments are not convincing because the distinction between “*efficiently willing*” and “*[only] permissively willing*” is in this case clearly *artificial*, if not *arbitrary*. Why? *God should have decreed from all eternity...* so far we agree without problem, but... Who should have moved, or even “forced”, God, “then”, before all eternity (i.e. before the beginning of creation Gen 1:1) to decree something, even “only” in a permissive way (*permissioniter volens*)? Even (*also*) Satan did not exist at this point, i.e. in eternity, before the beginning of creation (Gen 1:1); Satan also belongs to the category of creatures, whom God created (however not as *Satan* [= *enemy*], he became *Satan* only through and after his rebellion against his Creator). Therefore: for everything which God decrees before the beginning of creation (before all eternity), logically God is also responsible as he is the originator. At this time (meaning the “time” before creation, i.e. before the creation of space and time – the term: *point of time* is in this connection only a makeshift or “crutch”) there was nothing and no one who could have moved or even forced God to decree in a permissive (allowing it) way the fall into sin. Consequentially, in a supralapsarian concept, only God can be the originator of evil. Common sense (also created by God) and also the Scriptures show: For every decision, taken without influences or force from outside, one is also responsible; anything else is irrational, absurd.

¹⁰⁶ Be it determinism of a pantheistic, dualistic (Manichaeism) or (allegedly) “biblical-predestination” kind.

¹⁰⁷ Hypothetical universalism: cf. 1Ti 2:3-4; 2Pe 3:9; 1Jo 2:1-2 etc.

¹⁰⁸ The expression: “*Automaton*” is used in this connection by Henry Clarence Thiessen, op. cit., p. 176.

¹⁰⁹ Because the free will contradicts their doctrine of *unconditional predestination*.

¹¹⁰ Blocher is a moderate Calvinist and holds a position of Infralapsarianism (more on that see below).

¹¹¹ Henri Blocher says, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 18: “...ainsi le Créateur, responsable de *tous* les caractères du créé à l'origine, serait l'auteur du mal à titre de possible...”

Commentary to this, i.e. the 7th position: At least at first sight this “Calvinistic” objection against the free will of man (before his fall!) seems to have some weight, but nevertheless we consider it not to be conclusive. The following can be argued against this position: The arguments of Blocher in this connection are purely rationalistic. It is a kind of philosophy about *potentiality*, but his objection is ultimately mere speculation. To begin with, it has to be said that Blocher shares our opinion, that at the completion of creation (cf. Gen 1:31; 2:25) everything was very good; at that point evil did not exist in the universe. This was the start of “every-day-life” for man in the Garden of Eden. Evil was not yet a reality on earth. God commanded man the following: “*You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die!*” (Gen 2:16-17). Are these words not suggesting that man, at least before his fall, had a choice (i.e. *a free will*)? Now, not only Blocher, but ultimately all real predestinarians claim that Adam was only free to do good, i.e. to live in conformity with the will of God, but he was not really free to choose evil, i.e. that which is against the will of God. The predestinarian is forced to claim this, otherwise his deterministic system (which presupposes, that nothing can take place, which has not been decreed by God, because otherwise God would not be sovereign) falls like a house of cards. An objective reading of Gen 2:16 to 3:24 hardly allows another interpretation than the one, that Adam was free, if he wanted to, to decide for disobedience. Is anyone giving a warning and referring to consequences in case of disregard, if the person to whom the warning is addressed, is not really free to choose that which has been forbidden? The Calvinistic argumentation in this connection seems to us totally irrational and even absurd. If it were, as the Calvinists claim, God would be mocking his creature... or one could say that in this case he would be making fun of his marionettes. Blocher objects: If evil is an inherent evil in a created freedom, then we would give a status to evil in creation. He speaks, as mentioned, of the “*être virtuel*” (*virtual being*). God, the Creator of all beings and characters, would then also be the Creator of evil, because, so the argument of Blocher, God then also would be the Creator of that (*virtual being*), i.e. the possibility to choose evil. Blocher continues, that that which we designate as *inherent in a creature*, is not just *nothing*. It seems to us that the “problem” of which Blocher speaks, is simply and plainly derived from his own hypothetical or rather speculative thinking. We believe: God has created man as a moral being, with a free will, i.e. the possibility to choose that which is evil. It is Blocher himself, who gives to *this possibility of a free choice of evil* a status which he then calls the “*être virtuel*” (*virtual being*). Blocher's “problem” is due to the fact that he takes the *mere* possibility and makes of it “a something”, which he calls *virtual being*. The possibility as such, does not constitute anything! Also the mere possibility as such, to choose or do something evil, does not mean that this potential (i.e. hypothetical) evil exists already as a seed, waiting to germinate. One can turn Blocher's arguments against himself altogether: It was God himself, who firstly spoke to man and forbade him to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. To eat from that tree would be disobedience, i.e. evil. The initial imagination (or idea, thought) of the possibility of evil was already existing in the thought of God. Do we have to conclude from there, that evil already existed virtually in God? We consider this Calvinistic argumentation to be only a pretext to contest the free will of Adam. This does not change the fact, that we recommend the writing of Blocher, i.e. the chapter where he addresses the origin of evil.¹¹² He discovers in an impressive way the weaknesses of different proposals from philosophers, theologians and that of other religions, as we tried to summarise in the points: 1-6. He even opposes his colleagues from the supralapsarian camp, which we welcome. On the other hand, we have just reiterated, that he also opposes our position – that of the *free will* before the fall. For Blocher, the explanations concerning the free will are seen to come from Pelagianism or to be orientated from there (“*d'orientation pélagienne*”¹¹³). The following question arises: Since Blocher

¹¹² See *ibid.*, pp. 10-20.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 16. Blocher, himself a Calvinist, says this in a conciliatory tone. He opposes in his writings even the greatest heresies in a non-polemic style. The writer of these notes had the great privilege to study systematic theology for two years under Henri Blocher at the *Faculté Libre de Théologie Évangélique* in Vaux-sur-Seine (France). Let it be

rules out all the positions put forward by philosophers and religious thinkers up to now... what does he think himself; what is his suggestion? We could here add another, *point 8*. If we are not doing this, it has nothing to do with our preference of the number 7, but rather because Blocher suggests... to suggest nothing! But: “*nothing*”, may be an expression too harsh or categorical.

5 Blocher leaves the question simply open in that he says: the question concerning the origin of evil will/must remain an opaque (not transparent) mystery for us.¹¹⁴ This solution is actually quite wise. However it seems to us somewhat problematic that Blocher refuses the position which is followed by the majority of the evangelicals (which in our estimation is basically backed by Holy Scripture¹¹⁵) – and this based on a mere hypothetical argument – and withdraws then to his “own

10 explanation”, which ultimately only says that there is no explanation. This is a simple (too simple?) conclusion. Blocher assumes the position of a free will, which gives to the possibility of evil (“la possibilité du mal”) a kind of status within creation, which he calls: “l’être virtuel” (*virtual being*). Are these thoughts and arguments of Blocher perhaps influenced by the so-called¹¹⁶ “*mè on*”¹¹⁷ of Greek philosophy?¹¹⁸ In that he disclaims the existence of the “non-être relatif” (*relative none existence [or not-being]*), he at the same time attributes to us (or suspects us of) that we see the possibility of evil as a “non être relatif”. But for us the mere possibility (opportunity) of evil as such is *nothing*. The mystery (le mystère) will have to be looked for somewhere else: namely in the fact, that the almighty and sovereign God created moral beings with a free will, who can choose, what is against the will of the Creator, without thereby challenging the sovereignty of God in any

20 way! The rationalistic scheme of the Calvinists (like all deterministic systems) claims, that if something happens or something could happen, which has not been decreed by God himself, then God’s sovereignty would be questioned or compromised. Starting from this a priori they try to explain everything according to this scheme. God himself is enclosed in this *deterministic system*. We believe that the Bible speaks in some ways against this *predestinarian-deterministic* system. If

25 it was the plan and will of God to create beings with a free will that they could even revolt against him, i.e. that they could choose what God has not decreed, why should this compromise the sovereignty of God? He still remains sovereign, since he cannot be surprised (taken unawares) by one of his creatures.¹¹⁹ He, who knows everything in advance,¹²⁰ will also know how to take the “necessary measures” to make room for the free choice of his creature as well as the realisation of

added in this place, that while many Calvinists accuse the exponents of the free will of Pelagianism, the latter accuse the predestinarian of being influenced by deterministic Manichaeism.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 19. “...doit rester pour nous le mystère « opaque ».” The expression is also used on page 20. Blocher calls it (p. 19) “l’énigme insoluble, l’écharde dans la chair de la raison (sanctifiée).” I.e.: “the unsolvable riddle, the thorn in the flesh of (sanctified) reason.”

¹¹⁵ In that it suggests free choice and resulting from it, responsibility of man.

¹¹⁶ We say *so-called*, because for us there is no such thing as a *relative none-being(existence)*. Only that which exists, exists. We admit that there “are” things, which do not yet exist, but will exist one day, because God said, that he will create them (cf. Isa 65:17; Rev 21:1ff etc.). While these things do not visibly exist yet, in the thoughts of God it is as if they were already there. In actual fact, Blocher claims, there is nothing in existence, which has not been created by God. The *Logos* (the Son of God) is the Creator of everything. There is nothing, which has not been created by him (cf. Joh 1:1-9; Col 1:16-18; Heb 1:1-3). This “*mè on*” (of Greek philosophy), if it should actually exist, would also have been created by Christ. If the possibility (of evil) would be an entity as such, if it was such a kind of *virtual being*, then Christ would also be its Creator, because there is nothing in existence, which has not been created by him. As stated, God has created man as a being with a free possibility of choice. When God said to man “*don’t eat of it...!*” he confirmed the *possibility* (not the reality) of evil, even if it didn’t exist at that point of time. The fact, that the possibility of evil was present in the mind of God, does not imply that evil existed already in some way.

¹¹⁷ A kind of “*relative none-being [or none-existence]*”; one says *relative*, because this *none-being* (or *none-existence*) is not really a *nothing*.

¹¹⁸ Henri Blocher mentions it on page 16 (op. cit., I), where he denounces certain theological currents (like the American “*théologie du processus*”, i.e. the so-called process theology; this concept speaks of a limited God, who constantly changes within himself).

¹¹⁹ This is claimed unjustly by proponents of the “*process theology*”.

¹²⁰ But to *foreknow* (προγινώσκω [*proginōskō*]) or rather the *foreknowledge* (πρόγνωσις [*prōgnōsis*]) does not necessarily imply *pre-determining* (in the sense *pinning down/determining*: in Greek: προορίζω [*prohorízō*]). By the way, in Rom 8:29-30 the verb προγινώσκω ([*proginōskō*] to know in advance) precedes the verb προορίζω ([*prohorízō*] to predetermine). One could deduce from this, that on the basis of faith, which God knows already, he predestines.

his plan. This could be illustrated by a puzzle: the sovereign God and Creator is so sovereign, that it is not impossible for him to complete the whole mosaic – piece by piece – in that he also takes into consideration those pieces of the mosaic, which result from an abuse of freedom by the creatures created with a free will. Calvinists or predestinarians accuse the supporters of the free will usually of *limiting* or *hemming in* God, but the latter could accuse the former of the same thing, that rather they limit God. To defend the a priori of the decrees of God, the Calvinists have designed a whole system. If one refutes their views, pointing to the logical fact, that the one who decides or decrees something, is consequently also responsible for it and that therefore according to their system God would of necessity also be the originator of evil – having decreed (even if only, as they say “*by permission*”) the fall, then they also use an irrational way of speaking, pointing to the fact that God, who is someone wholly different than all others (*le Dieu tout autre qu’un autre*), is able to decree or determine something, without compromising the responsibility of the creature concerned (i.e. the creature determined by him). Calvinists usually accuse the exponents of the free will of irrationality; but applying their own thoughts and arguments – concerning origin and completion – the irrational character of their system becomes obvious.¹²¹ We believe that Holy Scripture suggests that angels and man have been created with a free will. This seems to be implied already in Gen 2:16-17.

Thiessen cites Strong and says that which belongs to the essence of good, cannot be the reality of evil, but only its possibility.¹²² An objective reading of Holy Scripture allows us to conclude, that Adam was free to choose and that evil only entered this world, because the first man abused his freedom in that he chose, what was against the will of God. But immediately further questions assail us: Why has the first man – a holy being – chosen evil? Why did Eve allow herself to be deceived by the serpent? And, *last but not least*: Why has Lucifer sinned?

2. How could Adam, a holy creature, fall?

One thing is clear: God did not want man to sin. The Bible also does not conclude that man (i.e. Adam) could at the end do nothing else, but to sin; on the contrary:

a.) Adam could have not sinned

- While it is true, that man has been created with certain physical (bodily) limitations, it does not say that he has been created with moral limits or weaknesses. Rather, man was created *very good*; i.e. with integrity. He could have obeyed the Word of God, if he had chosen to do so. His sin, respectively, his fall, was not the (unavoidable) consequence of some supposed moral inferiority. God created man without sin, i.e. holy, very good (cf. Gen 1:31).
- God put man into an ideal surrounding and supplied him with all that was necessary for life (cf. Gen 2:15).

¹²¹ Take for instance the dogma by Heinrich Heppe (*Die Dogmatik der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche*. Rev. and ed. by Ernst Bizer. Neukirchen, Kreis Moers: Neukirchener Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1958.), who (like Blocher) tends towards an infralapsarian system. Heppe also teaches the predestinarian system of the decrees of God. Reading the relating passage one does not find Bible-texts to prove these Calvinistic hypotheses. With others, (i.e. other doctrinal matters) there are always Bible-verses quoted. This is similar in the case of Henri Blocher and other Calvinists. On the one hand they accuse the supporters of a free will of irrationalism, on the other hand, if one opposes certain points, where they claim predestinarian system, which contradict all human logic and sense of justice, they just point out: that God cannot be compared with man. They then just speak of a mystery, that God is just so much different, that it was possible (and still is) that he judges man in all righteousness, even (we refer to the case of Adam before the fall) if they ultimately had no free will to choose evil. As for us, we prefer to consider that the sovereignty of God does not exclude the creation of a being with a free will.

¹²² Henry Clarence Thiessen, op. cit., p. 179 (“What is necessary to goodness is not the actuality of evil, but only the possibility of evil.” Compare: Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Old Tappan, N. J.: Fleming H. Revell., 1969), p. 565).

- He entrusted him with a meaningful and adequate task/calling (Gen 2:15).
- He gave him a life-partner (Gen 2:18ff).
- And, *last, but not least*, he did not leave him in ignorance. God wanted only the very best for his creature, Adam, and he very well warned him of the consequences of a possible disobedience (transgression) (Gen 2:16-17; cf. 3:11). Incidentally the words in Gen 2–4 show that God communicated with man, had fellowship with him. Instead of falling for the deception of the serpent, Eve could have asked God, i.e. consulted with God. Surely God would not have refused an answer. But Eve did not do that and Adam apparently followed her in this. This was their responsibility and their fault at the same time.

10 b.) His sin was a free act of the will towards disobedience

- **Eve allowed herself to be tempted and deceived** by the serpent (Gen 3:1ff; 1Ti 2:14; 2Co 11:3). What may have been the main reason that she allowed herself to be misled, to listen to the serpent? Curiosity?¹²³ The desire or lust, to try the beautiful fruit? Or possibly, the ambition, to become like God (namely, through a certain knowledge, which was not theirs)? We will return to the theme when we speak of the fall of Lucifer. The sin of Lucifer was that he wanted to be like God. Was it the intention of Lucifer – now that he had become *Satan* (in Hebrew: שָׂטָן [*Šāṭān*] which means *enemy, opponent*) – after failing in his ambition, to involve man in the same rebellion against God? Let it be noted: the rebellion of the Antichrist at the end of time will reach the same sinful climax, namely, that he will sit in the temple and demand to be worshiped like God: see 2Th 2:4; Rev 13:11ff.
- The following question suggests itself: Why did Adam also eat? It was Eve who had been deceived by Satan, i.e. the serpent (1Ti 2:14). Why then did Adam also eat from the fruit? We suppose (admittedly somewhat speculative) that Adam did it because of affection towards his wife.¹²⁴ Initially in 1Ti 2:13-14 and 2Co 11:3 Eve is accused of allowing herself to be deceived by the serpent. But still it is stated that sin came through Adam (not through Eve) into the world (Rom 5:12ff). It remains open whether this is only the case because man is seen as the origin of his descendants. On the other side, one could ask, what is “harder”: to discern and see through the cunning of Satan, who is powerful and intelligent and knows how to dress up as an angel of light (2Co 11:14), or to resist the “deceptive” (?) words (and/or gestures?) of a (one's own) wife? This should only be a little (!?☺) impulse to set us thinking.¹²⁵

3. Why did Satan sin?

It could be said perhaps in the following way: In the sin of Satan, evil had its beginning in the universe and through the sin of the first man, evil (and at the same time *death*) entered the world. But from where came (comes) Satan and why has *he* chosen evil?

One thing is certain: **A holy God cannot be the Originator/Creator of evil.** Admittedly, he is the Creator of Satan, but he has not created him as *Satan* (שָׂטָן [*Šāṭān*]; Greek Σατανᾶς [*Satanas*]), but as a high, spiritual, and holy being. Only then and only through disobedience (we call it the *initial* disobedience), this high spiritual being (angel) became *Satan*, the *opponent/enemy* of God and lastly also of man. In the same way, man was originally good and only became a sinner through transgression (sin). In the same way a number of angels have fallen (see 2Pe 2:4; Jud 6), because

¹²³ It is often said that women are usually more curious than men! ☺♂

¹²⁴ This is also the view of Henry Clarence Thiessen, op. cit., p. 181: "To summarize, the woman fell by deception; the man by affection (Gen 3:13, 17; 1Ti 2:14)."

¹²⁵ A proverb in this context: "*The stronger sex became the weaker sex, because of its weakness for the weaker sex...*" or the other way round: "*The weaker sex became the stronger sex, because of the stronger sex's weakness for the weaker sex.*" ☺☺♂

they followed the devil (symbolically *the dragon*) in rebellion against God (compare: *a third part of the stars* in Rev 12:3-4.7-9). God, who is light (1Jo 1:5), cannot be the Creator of evil, of darkness, because in him there is no darkness.¹²⁶ We must not forget what it has “cost” God: his Son became man to atone for our sin and to defeat the devil, whose slaves, since the fall of Adam, man had become (cf. Rom 8:32; 2Co 5:19-21; Heb 2:14-18; 1Jo 3:8).

Since Scripture does not reveal much on the subject, we have to assume that we are faced with a mystery, a mystery of God. Nevertheless we note that already the early church saw in two prophetic texts an allusion to the origin and fall of Satan: Reading **Isa 14:9-14** and **Eze 28:11-19** we have to concede, that not all descriptions and references can be applied in a full sense to the kings of Babylon and Tyros. Is God revealing certain truths concerning Satan in these special passages of Holy Scripture? If the answer is yes,¹²⁷ these verses would be a revelation of a very old past indeed.

Here, some remarks pointing in the direction that these texts (at least *partly*) may aim also at the devil and not only at the earthly kings referred to:

- The reference is to a *cherub* (Eze 28:14).
- The reference is to a *holy mountain of God* (Eze 28:14).
- The theme is *Eden*, paradise, the Garden of God¹²⁸ (Eze 28:13).
- God says in Eze 28:15 to the cherub: “*You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.*” Of no earthly king it could be said, that he was blameless since the day of his creation... it seems fair to assume, that this speaks of Lucifer, rebelling against God.
- He was in heaven (Isa 14:12; cf. Eze 28:13-17) and was thrown out from there (cf. Rev 12:7-9), which hardly can be said about humans, who are on earth, while angels actually are heavenly beings.
- He is called *light-bearer* (*shining one*), *son of dawn* (Isa 14:12). From this passage, i.e. the Hebrew word הִלָּל ([*hēlēl*] probably derived from the Hebrew verb הָלַל (*hālāl* = *to shine*), and from the Latin translation (*Lucifer* — see *Vulgate*), the name of **Lucifer** (*lux* = *light*; *fero* = *to bear*: so *light-bearer*) is derived. This term is aptly applied to Satan (cf. 2Co 11:14).

We believe that the descriptions in these passages also refer to the fall of Satan, the angel of light. What was his sin? His pride led to his sin and to his fall! Sin had so to speak its beginning in him, because from the day of his creation until that point in time when he decided to rebel against God, he was blameless (cf. Eze 28:15). In our estimation the origin of evil in the universe dates back to the revolt of Lucifer against God. Satan was the first to sin (cf. Joh 8:44). Since his fall it was and is his goal to implicate man in his rebellion against God. But now the same question concerning the sin of the devil arises: Why would a shining angel, blameless since his creation, suddenly rebel against God – his Creator?

In Isa 14:13-14 we find a possible answer:

- *I will ascend to heaven.*¹²⁹
- *I will raise my throne above the stars of God.*

¹²⁶ This refers of course to *darkness* in the sense of *evil* and not to darkness (as created by God: cf. Isa 45:7) which only means *absence of light*.

¹²⁷ What we hold to be true.

¹²⁸ It could also refer to Adam in the Garden of Eden. There are actually commentators, who relate the cited passages in Isa 14 and Eze 28 to Adam and his fall in Eden, to the Antichrist (cf. 2Th 2:4) and to the devil thrown out of heaven (cf. Rev 12:7-9), as well as to the kings of Babylon and Tyros.

¹²⁹ In Hebrew grammar the so-called cohortative form (1st Person, singular: *I will ascend...* etc.).

- *I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.*
- *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.*
- *I will be like the most High.*

5 In Eze 28:16-18 it is summed up:

- *Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned.*
- *Your heart became proud on account of your beauty.*
- *By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries.*

10

The cohortative form “...*I will ascend . . . I will be like the most High...*” (Isa 14:13-14) would therefore point unmistakably to a free act of will on the part of Lucifer. God reprimands him in no uncertain terms. If the reference to the accused cherub, i.e. light-bearer, actually refers to Lucifer, i.e. Satan, and his fall (into sin), we would conclude from this text, that Lucifer acted as a creature with a free will. Lucifer has abused his freedom in that he desired that which was not within the will of the Creator. Afterwards he succeeded (unfortunately) to implicate man in the same mistake. This leads to the next question.

15

4. Why did God cast Satan upon the earth?

20

It is true, God could have banned him on another planet (why not Mars?)... or (even better) he could have destroyed Satan there and then to prevent him from causing more damage.¹³⁰ That not being so... God has cast him upon the earth, quasi to us! Maybe man would not have sinned, if... if... if... It will be in vain for us to wait for an answer to all these (hypothetical) questions. Why, because Holy Scripture does not offer answers to these questions. Let us simply conclude: this will remain a mystery. In the next world we may be told more. Before we go to the next matter (which naturally connects with it), we still want to add a few remarks (an impulse for thought): Satan fell without temptation from outside. He sinned out of his own will, driven by his proud ambitions. His judgement is definite. For Satan and the angels who followed his rebellion against God, there is no possibility of salvation.¹³¹ This is also the view of Thiessen, but he adds, that if man had fallen without a tempter, if he had been the cause of his own sin, then man would himself have become like Satan. This reveals the graciousness of God, namely, in the fact that God has left a possibility for salvation to man.¹³² Here we agree with Thiessen only in part. *Only in part*, because we fear that this way of argumentation could be misunderstood. There is the risk, that we play down, i.e. minimise the lapse of Adam. Has not Eve reacted in the same way after her lapse, answering God: “*The serpent deceived me, and I ate!*” Concerning the reaction of Adam – in all the tragedy (and thinking of the consequences for us!) of the event – it is almost difficult, not to smile, reading the relevant verses: “*The woman whom **you** gave to be with me, **she** gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*” Are we not smiling somehow condescendingly at Adam? With some healthy self-criticism, we may well find the same trait in us, namely, in many cases we put the blame on the Creator. Adam was of course himself responsible for his transgression. On the other hand it is a fact, that man (especially Eve) was tempted, deceived from outside through the serpent – through Satan. Satan however was not driven from outside, sin rather started with him. The thought, to become like God, arose in Lucifer himself. This may be *the* reason, that while God is willing to pardon

30

35

40

¹³⁰ Compare with Rev 20:1-3: Satan shall be locked up for a 1000 years, for this very reason, i.e. so that he cannot tempt mankind anymore.

¹³¹ Compare with Heb 2:14-16: Jesus came into this world to save man, but not angels. Salvation in Jesus is not for the fallen angels. These have once and for all fallen and are reserved for judgement: cf. 2Pe 2:4; Jud 6; Mat 25:41. The testimony of Scripture speaks against an “apokatástasis” in the sense of a final salvation of all creatures (that everything will be reconciled). More on this theme see below.

¹³² See Henry C. Thiessen, op. cit., p. 176.

man, this does not extend and apply to the devil and “his” angels. The Bible is silent on the subject. This is only a hypothesis, a speculation.

In our opinion one should also not say (like Thiessen does) that Adam would have become Satan himself, if he had sinned without instigation from outside. Adam is a man, Satan an angel.¹³³ However Holy Scripture declares openly, that God loves man despite the fall (i.e. *despite sin*) (cf. Gen 3:9ff; Rom 5:8-10 etc.) and he wants that all man should be saved (cf. Joh 3:16; 1Ti 2:3-4; 2Pe 3:9 etc.). Here begins Soteriology: the doctrine of an undeserved redemption, by grace and the mercy of God... (cf. Joh 3:16; 1Jn 4:9-19)!

5. Why did God allow the temptation of man?

Actually, there is another question which imposes itself before this one: Why has God not only planted the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, but also the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Why this commandment, this prohibition? The answer – we believe – is found in the general calling, i.e. destination, of man: God created him as a moral being and therefore with a free will, so as to live in communion with him.

- A being, created in the image of God is a moral being. This implies the possibility of free choice.
- Communion and the love of God demand the possibility of free choice.
- Man is called to rule over all creatures of the earth. The moral condition of this rule is obedience.
- This holy disposition of man needed to be tested, to develop a holy character (cf. Heb 5:8). God did not want man to sin. Man could have chosen the good, i.e. to obey God. The mere possibility to be able to choose sin does not make anyone a sinner. If man had resisted the temptation, the act of sin, Satan would have had to leave him (compare with the temptation of Jesus in Mat 4:1ff; cf. Jam 4:7; 1Pe 5:8). The possibility to resist shows the benevolence of God. If man had resisted temptation, his holy nature would have been confirmed and it would have led to a holy character.¹³⁴
- Man is not a marionette, a robot; he is rather a moral being. The character is formed through free choice of the good in the face of evil, which actually also can be chosen. Compare in this connection with **Deu 8:2**. Where there is no freedom or possibility of choice, there is also no love. An example: a husband expresses love to his wife by choosing her and renouncing all others. If man could not have chosen at least in one matter against the will of God,¹³⁵ would he not have been a mere marionette, a slave... without choice... without love... only "cold" obedience... no more?

¹³³ The Hebrew word *Šāṭān* (שָׁטָן) means *adversary* or *enemy*. In that sense unconverted humans are “satans” as well because they are also enemies of God since the fall (compare to Rom 5:8-10; Eph 2:1-3).

¹³⁴ See also: Henry C. Thiessen, op. cit., p. 200.

¹³⁵ I.e. to eat from the fruit of the forbidden tree.

C. Temptation

1. The historicity of the account of the fall in Gen 3

Liberal theology sees in the account of Gen 3 not much more than a repetition of a Babylonian myth. These critics do not believe in the historicity of Adam and Eve. The account in Gen 3 has for them, at the most, a kind of symbolic significance and value. Theologians who hold to the historical character of the related events are no doubt a minority. We believe that Gen 3 is not only some kind of allegory. The events are told in the form of a story; and also the context is quite historical.¹³⁶ There are several reasons for evangelical theologians to believe in the historicity of Gen 3 (as well as the rest of *Genesis*, the first book of the Bible):

- Other parts of the Old Testament confirm the historicity of Adam and therefore of Gen 1–5: cf. 1Ch 1:1ff; Hos 6:7.
- The genealogy of Luk 3:23-38 confirms the historicity of Adam.
- Jesus confirms the historicity of Gen 1–3 (i.e. that of Adam and Eve): Mat 19:4-5 (cf. Mar 10:6-9).
- Paul also confirms this in several of his letters, explicitly naming Adam and/or Eve: Rom 5:12-19; 1Co 15:21-22.45; 2Co 11:3; 1Ti 2:13-14.
- Paul's doctrine of original sin (starting with Adam) in Rom 5:12ff is reiterated in his speech on the Areopagus in Athens as retold by Luke in Act 17:24-26.
- Jude 14 also speaks for it.

Those who deny the historicity of the related events in Gen 3, challenge at the same time the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. If Genesis chapter 3 were not historical then Jesus and the apostles would have been mistaken by building their teaching on fables or they would have (consciously) deceived us, teaching that these things happened while knowing that it was not so.

2. What is *temptation*?

The Old Testament uses basically two verbal-roots for *proving*, *testing* and *tempting*: *bāchan* and *nissāh*.¹³⁷ The verb *bāchan* can be translated with *to prove*, *to test*, *to tempt* and *nissah* with *prove*, *to put to the test*, *try*, *test*, *investigate*. The translation of the verb in question should be made in the light of the respective context.

In the New Testament the verbs *peirátsō* (πειράζω) or *peiráō* (πειράω) are mainly used. Both verbs – according to context – may be translated as: *to prove*, *to test*, *to try out* or *to tempt*. The substantive *peira* (πεῖρα) can mean *proof*, *trial*, *examination*, or *experience*, *peirasmós* (πειρασμός) *test*, *temptation*, *deception*, *misleading*.

What is certain is that Satan tempted man in order to make him fall. The devil always tempts with a negative goal. He is a destroyer, i.e. he always leads into destruction.¹³⁸ God, on the other hand is not trying man so as to make him stumble (cf. explicitly Jam 1:13). God may be *testing* man, so as

¹³⁶ Gen 3 is closely connected with Gen. 4–5.

¹³⁷ *Bāchan* in *Qal* (יָבַח) or *nissāh* in *Piel* (נִסָּה).

¹³⁸ Also the meaning of his name: *Abaddon* (from the Hebrew verb אָבַד [ʾābad]; in Piel *ʾibbad* = *to get lost*, *to mislead* etc.) respectively *Apollyon* (Ἀπολλύων [Apollúōn] = participle of the Greek verb ἀπόλλυμι [apóllumi] or ἀπολλύω [apollúō]) suggesting: *the one who leads to destruction*. Compare the two expressions in Rev 9:11.

to reveal the attitude of man; to *prove* in the sense of *testing*. The most explicit passage in this context is in our opinion the key verse from the 5th book of Moses: Deu 8:2: *Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands*. The Septuagint¹³⁹ translates the Hebrew verb *nissah* (to test) in this verse with the verb *ekpeirátsō*, which may be rendered in this context with *to put to the test*. The prefix “*ek*” may especially point to the fact that the objective of this test was to test the inner (hidden) attitude of heart in the Israelites. To put someone to the test or trying someone to find out the true attitude and intention is not bad as such. To test someone is only evil, if it is done to cause suffering (sadism), to make someone fall, i.e. to lead someone into sin. The latter is the true work of the devil; so he is also called in Scripture: *the tempter* (ὁ πειράζων = *ho peirátsōn*; participle of *peirátsō*): cf. Mat 4:3; 1Th 3:5. Satan is the great tempter, the enemy of man. God is not himself tempting, but he may allow that we are tempted to prove our inner attitudes, and that we may glorify God in resisting the tempter. We are reminded of Job, who glorified God through his testimony and his faithfulness: Job 1:8.21-22; 2:1-10. Holy Scripture assures the believer, that God is faithful and that he will not allow that his children are tested beyond their ability to resist, i.e. beyond their breaking-point (cf. 1Co 10:13).

Eve sinned after she was tempted and deceived by Satan, the serpent (2Co 11:3; 1Ti 2:13-14). Adam possibly fell being deceived through his affection for Eve, his partner (?). Both fell in that they allowed themselves to be deceived by someone. Satan on the other hand was not tempted by anyone outside himself. Sin was quasi born in him, was first found in him. He was not tempted by anyone. He must one day have decided by himself to be like God: Conspiracy, usurpation, rebellion... sin is to want that, which God has not decreed for us. This was the initial rebellion, *the* true, original sin! A number of angels followed Satan in his rebellion¹⁴⁰ and unfortunately he succeeded in leading man into the same sin. But as already mentioned, there is a way for man to escape the divine judgement: namely through Jesus Christ, the second Adam (cf. Rom 5:18-21; and 1Co 15:21-22).

3. Temptation and the tactics of the devil

Satan, the tempter, knows very well how to “disguise” himself. It must not be forgotten that Satan is an angel of light. Angels know more than man and also are more powerful than the latter. An angel is an invisible spirit, but he can “disguise” himself and appear to man in visible form, be it in the likeness of a man or animal (cf. Num 22:22ff).¹⁴¹ It seems that Satan used a serpent as a “vehicle” to approach Eve. Genesis 3 is a good lecture to show us what tactics Satan is using. How did he proceed? Step by step he awakened in Eve a desire, a lust:

- **To own** what God had forbidden her.
- **To know** what God had not revealed to her.
- **To be** what God did not want her to be.

In this temptation man was exposed to a heavy attack upon body, soul and spirit. The devil proceeds even today with the same methods. We must expect (i.e. count on the fact) that he uses the same tactics, when he approaches us.

¹³⁹ The *Septuagint* is the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

¹⁴⁰ Rev 12:4ff seems to point to the fact, that a third of the angels followed the devil (see above) in his rebellion.

¹⁴¹ This applies to the good angels and to Satan and his angels (his demons). Compare to Heb 1:14; 13:2; Gen 18–19; 2Co 6:16-20; 2Co 11:3; Eph 6:12ff etc. More to this theme see in our brochure on *Angelology*.

a.) Doubting the Word of God

Gen 3:1 *Did God really say...?*

Man lived in harmony, obeying his Creator. A man who lives in close communion with God is not endangered to fall (cf. Psa 125:1; Eph 6:11ff). The devil knows that. Therefore he firstly tries to sow doubts into man's mind: "Did God really say...?" Note, that Satan never uses the name *Yahweh* (the name of the covenant-God), but rather the name *Elohim*. When Satan succeeded in "infiltrating" the mind of Eve with doubts, he continued in sowing distrust in God and his Word. What should Eve have done in that moment? We ask:

- Where was Adam at the time? Did Eve decide to eat of the forbidden fruit without first consulting with her husband? If yes, why?
- Why did Eve not turn to God and ask for clarity when the serpent insinuated doubt by questioning the Word of God? (Compare the story of Joshua and Israel in Jos 9; especially verse 14).
- Why did Adam (afterwards) listen to his wife instead of turning to God?

b.) A no to God's Word

Gen 3:4 *You will not surely die, the serpent said to the woman*

After Satan had confused Eve's trust in God and his Word, he spoke a plain lie. He substituted the Word of God with his own word, a lie. In the words of Jesus, coming to us through John 8:44, he probably alludes to this event in Eden. The Word of God should serve as our fortress and weapon against the assaults of the devil, the tempter. Jesus left a good example for us, answering the devil every time with the Word of God, when he was tempted. The story of the temptation of Jesus in the synoptic gospels (Mat 4:1ff; Mar 1:12-13; Luk 4:1ff) shows by the way, that Satan knows the Word of God, the Bible, very well; sometimes he even cites it: cf. Mat 4:6. How does Jesus react to this? He resisted the devil by appealing to the Word of God (in contrast to the devil) in a correct way. In Eph 6:10-18 Paul gives us precise instructions for this fight against the enemy. In Eph 6:17 Paul says that the Word of God is to be our sword (cf. Heb 4:12). Unfortunately Eve listened to the word of the tempter rather than trust in the Word of God. She believed the lie of Satan, which suggested that God may be withholding something good from her. When Satan succeeded in landing this blow, the defeat of man was inescapable.

c.) A word of Satan

Gen 3:5 *...you will be like God...*

Man never can exist independently. Either he remains in fellowship with his Creator by trust and obedience, or he is a slave of the one, who is the arch-enemy of God, i.e. the devil. In the moment when man moved away from God and his Word, he became the slave of Satan. This is how the word of Jesus in Mat 6:24 is to be understood: "*No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other...*" Satan succeeded in his coup: man, misusing his freedom – following Satan in his revolt, which consists in wanting to be like God – became himself a slave of Satan: cf. Joh 8:34-36.44; Rom 6:16; 2Pe 2:19.

Application

The tactics of Satan have not changed; up to this day he tries to sow in us **doubts concerning the Word of God**, to take this word away and to **substitute** it by his own word. One just needs to think of what is happening in our churches today.

After the Reformation in the 16th century, Europe was a fortress of Biblicism. In an after-effect Europe experienced several awakenings. Let us think for instance of the Methodist awakening movement of John Wesley (1703-1791) in England. Where is the Methodist church today? We are conscious of the fact that one must not generalise – but still we ask: what has become of the holiness-movement preached by Wesley? When Bible-criticism entered the seminaries of various denominations, the decline of the churches concerned became also apparent. When pastors move away from the heritage of the reformation, the *sola scriptura* (the scripture only), then negative consequences for their churches cannot be avoided. Experience shows that the abandonment of full authority of Holy Scripture sooner or later also affects the ethics of a church. The consequences are *situation-ethics* and increasing conformism. In protestant state-churches these consequences of liberalism are especially apparent: *Tolerance* is the slogan. Evangelizing, mission and holiness are *passé*; *integration*, *tolerance* and *progress* are en vogue instead. Conformity to the world by the official churches has progressed in a disturbing measure: After tolerating concubines, divorce (no matter with what motive) and abortion, now also homosexuality is accepted; in many positions there are now even homosexual pastors or lesbian pastors. Even worse, in certain state-churches, pastors were sacked because of their courage to denounce these conditions which clearly go against Scripture.

How did it come about, that so many churches moved away from biblical doctrine in such a way? The decline began, when the apriority of the authority and inerrancy of Holy Scripture was abandoned. Pluralistic minded churches of the west are trying to bring also evangelical (still evangelical) churches to their side. This applies especially to churches in the third world. It is normally missionaries from Bible-believing churches, who are planting churches in remote “bush-areas”. The devil has no joy in that. In countries where Christians are persecuted, liberal theology is no big danger. In these countries the arch-enemy tries to discourage the believers through persecution. Liberals and pluralists usually infiltrate young churches – churches planted by evangelical Christians – in countries where there is rather less opposition. Member churches of the ECC (Ecumenical Church Council) and their mission societies usually also have more financial means than evangelicals and the pious. One of their tactics (possibly the main one) is to woo young evangelical churches with offers of financial, i.e. material help (one could also say: *to buy themselves into*). They offer financial help for various social projects (many of these projects are good as such) and scholarships. After they have taken root in a (still evangelical) church through their financial influence, then suddenly they begin to prescribe/dictate, where the new candidates for study have to go for their education.¹⁴² All of a sudden, there are only scholarships available at pluralistic (liberal) centres of education. The newly graduated pastors start in their office as representatives of historic-critical theology and slowly churches that have been founded by Bible-believing missionaries are undermined and eroded by the virus of liberal theology. Nothing new under the sun – this is the old tactic of the devil already used against the first man: *Has God really said? Forget it, it is not so... you cannot just believe this... this cannot be taken literally... after all, the Bible is an old book... which needs to be brought up to date... one has to live with the times... to conform to the times...* This is the tactic of Satan – this is also always the consequence of liberal theology. Genesis 3 is very much “present-day”. Let us be watchful!

The fall of Eve started where she listened to the word of the serpent. **Jam 1:13-15** describes the development of sin, i.e. the process which starts with temptation and ends in the act of sin. At the beginning there is lust, which entices us. When **lust** has conceived, i.e. found our **consent**, it gives birth to actual **sin** which in turn leads to **death** (cf. Rom 6:23).

¹⁴² This tactic is applied, for example, by the rather pluralistic German Mission Society VEM, Wuppertal, Germany. Together with other missionaries we have become ourselves a victim of their dubious methods in our former mission field in the equatorial region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (ex-Zaire). Finally all evangelical missionaries saw no other way than to withdraw from the Congolese Church alliance in question.

Before man took, outwardly, from the forbidden fruit he had already fallen, inwardly. The actual sin of man consisted in his emancipation (breaking loose) from God, his Creator. Man fell, because he wanted to be like God.

The Son of God has introduced salvation for man in that he humbled himself and became man. The sin of the devil was that he tried to rise above himself. The same applies to man: the EGO of man has separated itself from God to become autonomous. This was the great deception of Satan. Instead of rising up and becoming autonomous man took a deep fall: he became the slave of sin and with that also a slave of death and the devil.

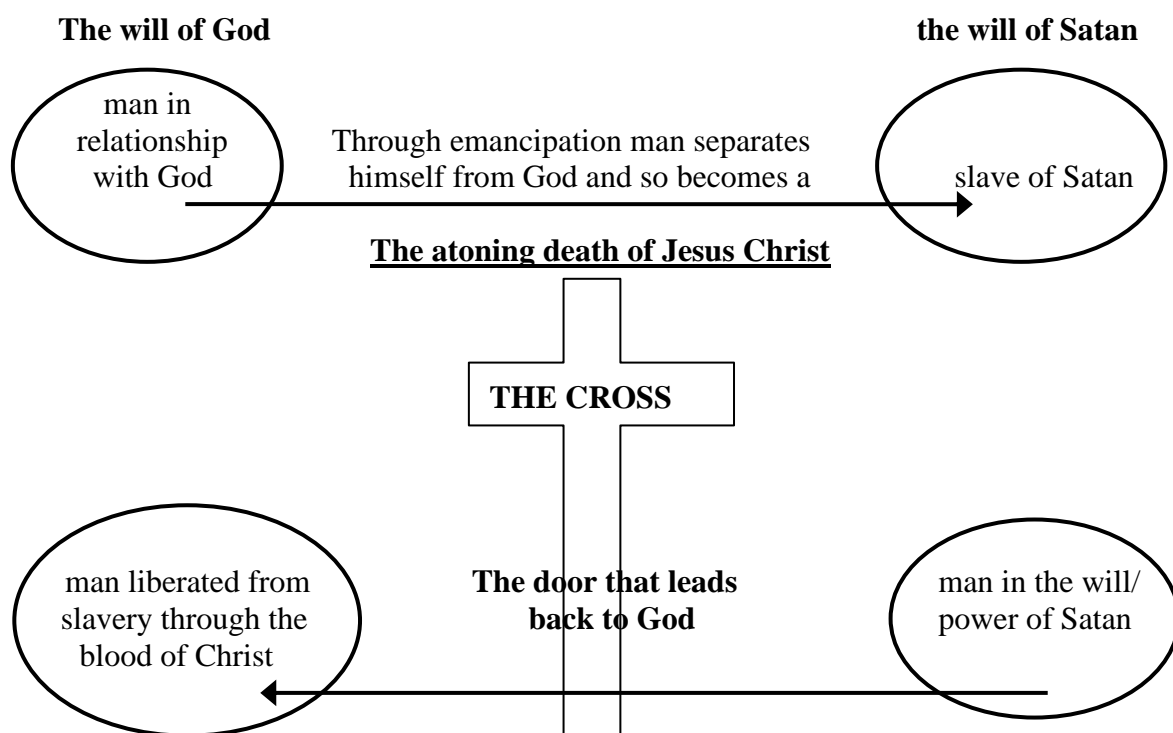
But God – in his love – gives the *outstanding* good example: through his Son he created for us a way of salvation, namely Jesus Christ, the second Adam, who did the exact opposite of the first Adam: He made nothing of (lowered) himself (cf. Phi 2:5ff) while our forefather, the first Adam, tried to rise above himself.

Concerning temptation, Luther said fittingly, that while we cannot avoid crows flying around our heads, we can hinder them to build nests on our heads.

In other words, temptations will come, but it is for us to resist temptation (i.e. the tempter par excellence, Satan, who disguises himself as an angel of light) with the help of God and appealing to his Word, so that we are not cheated by the enemy but bring glory to our Lord and God.

The only way to escape the consequences of the fall (into sin) lies in the possibility that the Son of God “irons out” the transgression committed by man, in that he was ready to go the opposite way, i.e. the way from above, coming down in self humiliation, to liberate man from the deep mess he had fallen into – the chains of sin, of death and of the devil. Christ did this in his atoning/substitute death on the cross, paying the debt of man (cf. Col 2:13-15).

The fall of man and the way of salvation can be portrayed in the following way:



From this follows: since the fall, man is by nature separated from God, bound to Satan and spiritually dead: cf. Psa 51:7; Isa 59:2; Eph 2:1.3.

IV. SIN

Satan has succeeded to lead man into sin. Since his fall (into sin) man has a fallen and sinful nature. Man has been corrupted and by his own strength he is unable *not to sin*.

A. The fact of sin

5 1. God establishes sin as a fact

God uses graphic language, to show/demonstrate the sinful state of man:

Isa 1:6 *From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness...*

10 Sin is like a contagious disease that leads to death. It may be compared to leprosy: leprosy demands separation, isolation. This also applies to sin:

Isa 59:2 *But your iniquities have separated you from your God...*

15 *Sin* imprisons man and drives him to **sinful action**:

Pro 5:22 *The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him*

20 **Jer 5:25** *Your wrongdoings have kept these [gifts] away; your sins have deprived you of good.*

Isa 1:18 *Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.*

2. The Word of God reveals the existence of sin

25 The bright light of the presence of the triune God allows man to realise his own unholy and godless condition. When God reveals himself to a man, man realises his sinful state.

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------|--|
| 30 | Gen 32:11 | Jacob |
| | Job 40:4-5 and 42:5-6 | Job |
| | Psa 32 | David |
| | Isa 6:5 | Isaiah |
| | Joh 4:16-18 | the Samaritan woman |
| | Joh 8:7-9 | the Pharisees |
| | Mat 27:46 and 2Co 5:21 | Jesus, who was without sin, became sin for us! |

3. Sin becomes evident through the law

Rom 3:20 *...through the law we become conscious of sin.*

Rom 7:7 *...I would not have known what sin was except through the law.*

Rom 7:8 *But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.*

The law is like a kind of mirror, in which man sees his true nature and his character. The law shows the perversity of man (Rom 7:14) and demands his condemnation (Gal 3:10); it actually condemns man to death (Rom 7:10).

4. The believer knows about his sin

Rom 7:18 *I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature...*

Some commentators believe that Rom 6 speaks of the born again Christian, whereas Rom 7 refers to man before his conversion. With the probable majority of exegetes we think, that not only Rom 6, but also Rom 7 refers to born again man. In verses 19-25 Paul speaks (in our view) about himself as a Christian, because unconverted man does not really love the law (V. 22) and he does not serve the law of God in his mind (V. 25). Paul declares here that the flesh (also) of the believer resists the Word of God and so the will of God. In this light we also understand **Luther's** lament, when he says, he was more shocked over the state of his heart than over the pope with all his cardinals (cf. Gal 5:17).

He who knows much about God, also knows much about himself. True knowledge of God and his Word leads to true self-knowledge.

5. Nature testifies to the fact of sin

Rom 8:20 *For the creation was subjected to frustration...*

Gen 3:17 *Cursed is the ground because of you...*

Everywhere the Bible reveals the fact (i.e. the existence) of sin. The biographies of many biblical persons include the confession: *"I have sinned!"*

Exo 9:27 hardened Pharaoh

Jos 7:20 unmasked Achan

1Sa 15:30 rejected Saul

2Sa 12:13 penitent David

Job 42:6 tested Job

Mat 27:4 Judas, the betrayer

Luk 15:21 the prodigal son

1Ti 1:15 the apostle Paul (see the proverb: *Saul became Paul!*)

One only could ask:

Joh 8:46 *Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?*

Jesus was and is without sin (cf. 2Co 5:21; Heb 4:15); this is also the basis, that he could die on our behalf, to take our guilt upon himself (cf. 2Co 5:21; Isa 53).

- 5 Our ministry is not in the first instance to denounce (individual) sins in the life of people, but rather to proclaim the Word of God, i.e. to declare to our fellow men who God is and what his will (i.e. our true calling) for us is. If we do that, the Holy Spirit himself will convict people of their sin as they hear God's Word.

B. Sin (original/hereditary sin)

10 1. Definition

One has to distinguish between *sin* (Singular) and *sins* (Plural):

Mat 15:19 *For out of the heart come evil thoughts...*

- 15 One could explain as follows:

Sin:

Sins:

- | | | |
|---------------|---|------------|
| • Character | → | Behaviour |
| • Condition | → | Acts |
| • Source | → | River |
| • Roots | → | Fruit |
| • Cause | → | Effect |
| • What we are | → | What we do |

25

By *sin* (singular) we mean **our condition** or – differently expressed – **our nature**, which we have inherited from our parents. Therefore we speak of **original sin**. Sin (i.e. sinful nature: *condition*) comes first, after that follow sins (actions). Through Adam, the first man, sin came into the world (Rom 5:12). Adam had (begat) a son in his (Adam's) image (cf. Gen 5:3). He became the forefather of the whole of mankind (cf. Act 17:26), therefore all of us are born sinners by nature (cf. Psalms 51:7; Rom 5:19; Eph 2:3). We will first study the essence of sin and then deal with the question of imputation (charging/accounting) of sin on the whole of mankind

30

2. The essence (character) of sin

a.) Anarchy

- 35 **1Jo 3:4** *Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.*

Unlawfulness i.e. *lawlessness* comes from the Greek word ἡ ἀνομία (*hē anomía*), which is combined of the word *nomos* (*law*) and the prefix *Alpha* (privative *Alpha*; i.e. *Alpha* as privative affix). With the masculine form of this word (ὁ ἄνομος [*ho anomos*] = *the lawless one*) Paul alludes to the Antichrist:

40

2Th 2:8 ...and then the lawless one [*ὁ ἄνομος*] will be revealed...

The law is the expression of God's will. Sin is therefore the *lack of conformity to the law of God* (or to the will of God).

Therefore Jesus, who is without sin, has said:

Heb 10:7 Then I said, "Here I am – it is written about me in the scroll – I have come to do your will, O God!" (This is a quote from Psa 40:9)

Sinful man does the exact opposite: he looks after his own from God separated *EGO* and he goes his own ways:

Isa 53:6 ...each of us has turned to his own way

But not only emancipation, breaking loose from God manifests itself, there is also:

b.) Rebellion (insurrection) against God

Above we have spoken of the sin, that originated (was born) in the heart of Lucifer (cf. Isa 14:13-14; Eze 28:15-16). The Bible shows that at the time of the Antichrist, sin will reach its maniac culmination (paroxysm).

2Th 2:4 He [the enemy] will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. (cf. Rev 13:14-15)

It is Satan, who has projected this sin into the heart of man. Because he followed the voice of the devil, man (like Satan) became the enemy of God:

Rom 5:10 For if, when we were God's enemies (of God), we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son...

Rom 8:7 ...the sinful mind is hostile to God...

Sin shows itself in a negative attitude towards God and his Word. Compare this with Christ, who was without sin:

Joh 5:30 ...for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me (i.e. the will of the Father).

Mat 26:39 ...Yet not as I will, but as you will.

c.) Sin is egocentricity (selfishness)

Sin has so to speak allied itself with the *EGO* of man. Selfhood as such (*per se*) is not sin. Sin was and is the separation (breaking away) of the "I", (i.e. the self) from God, the Creator.

Isa 14:13-14 I will...!¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Above we have already referred to the grammatical cohortative form in this passage.

Egoism (i.e. our egoistic nature) may have many different ways of showing itself. The true character of sin is shown in its *self-glorification* and in the *self-addiction* of man. The carnal desires, sensuality and all selfish ambitions have their root in the *Ego* of man.

- 5 **2Ti 3:2** *People will be lovers of themselves* (i.e. self-addicted; Greek φίλαυτοι¹⁴⁴ [*phílautoi*] = *lovers of self*)

To be *crucified with Christ* (i.e. *to live in a new life*) involves the following:

- 10 **1Co 6:19-20** *...You are not your own...*
- 2Co 5:15** *...that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

- 15 **Rom 14:7** *For none of us lives to himself alone...*

In other words: he who says that he abides in HIM, he should also live (walk) as HE has lived (cf. 1Jo 2:6):

- 20 **Joh 7:18** *He who speaks on his own does so to gain honour for himself, but he who works for the honour of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.*

- 25 **Rom 15:3** *For even Christ did not please himself...*

Sin is not just a negative matter (i.e. a lack of love towards God); the problem is that man puts his own *Ego* in the place of God. Not God, but he himself (his own “I”) takes the first place. Sinful man puts himself, his own *Ego*, into the centre. Pure egocentricity! Instead of orientating his life towards God, man revolves around himself. In this connection the significance of sanctification becomes especially clear:

- 30 **Joh 3:30** *He must become greater; I must become less.*
- 35 **Gal 2:20** *I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

And where do we stand? Is it the Lord, who stands and reigns at the centre of our life, or is it our own *Ego*? Have we been really crucified and spiritually resurrected (i.e. renewed) with Him to go forward in a new (changed) life(style)?

40 **3. The total depravity of the human nature**

On account of sin man is totally depraved. Man’s spirit as well as soul and body have been taken hold of by sin and are therefore under judgement. Contrary to the claims of many humanists; there is no *good core* (or *divine spark*) inside man. It is therefore an illusion to believe, that man by himself will develop/evolve into something good. Here we find an unbridgeable chasm between

45 *humanism* and *biblical doctrine*. Concerning the total perversion of man Holy Scripture says the following:

- Gen 8:21** *every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood*

¹⁴⁴ This Greek word combines the root φιλέω ([*philéō*] to love) and αὐτός ([*autos*] self).

Isa 1:5-6 *...Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted. From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness...*

5 **Rom 7:18** *I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature*

Because of our sinful condition before God, we are by nature children of wrath (cf. Eph 2:3).

Because of his indwelling (inherent) sin, man in his own strength is unable to do good:

10

Mat 7:18 *...a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.*

Rom 7:17-20 *...I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out...*

15

Rom 8:7 *The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.*

Indwelling sin not only makes me incapable to do the good, it actually dominates me and urges me to do evil:

20

Rom 5:21 *...so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

25

Rom 6:12 *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*

Rom 7:20 *Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.*

30

Only in taking seriously the total perversity of human nature, we then also understand the absolute necessity that man needs to be born again, if he wants to know and live in fellowship with God.

Joh 3:7 *...You must be born again!*

35

It is true, that there is (still) some *good* in man. But this *goodness* is not the germinating cell of that which he (sometime) should become (or evolve into), but rather the ruins (remains) of what he once (before the fall) was. In theology we speak here of *general or common grace*.¹⁴⁵ God in his grace has taken care that evil will not increase to such a measure, that life on earth should become impossible. God restrains evil (cf. 2Th 2:6-7) and also postpones judgement, so that men still have the opportunity to repent (cf. 2Pe 3:9).

40

4. The seat of sin

Rom 7:18 *I know that no good thing lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.*

45 Sin dwells in our flesh, meaning, in our entire fallen human nature. If we compare this statement of the apostle Paul with our definition of sin, we understand the meaning of Jesus' words:

¹⁴⁵ See also Henri Blocher, op. cit., vol. I, p. 37. To the theme of *common grace* the Dutch Neo-Calvinists Abraham Kuyper (theologian) and Dooyeweerd (philosopher) devote special attention.

Mat 15:18 *But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean'.*

Even the born again man still possesses the old nature. In man, regenerated through the Holy Spirit, two natures struggle against each other (cf. Gal 5:17). Sin also dwells in a believing man.

1Jo 1:8 *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*

The believer is urged to resist sin with the power of the Holy Spirit, so that sin will not dominate him:

Rom 6:12 *...therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body...*

Here the theme of *sanctification* is touched.

5. The activation of sin

Inherent sin shows itself in the disposition and inclination to commit acts of sin:

Mat 7:16 *By their fruit you will recognise them.*

Mat 7:17 *...a bad tree brings forth bad fruit.*

Mat 7:18 *...and a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit.*

Mat 15:19 *For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery...*

Sin within us is a condition, i.e. it is our nature. There is a force working within us that activates *sin* (singular) and drives us to commit *sins* (plural):

a.) The law

Rom 7:9 *Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life...*

Rom 7:8 *...for without the law sin was dead*

The following questions arise immediately:

Rom 7:7 *What shall we say, then? Is the law sin?*

Is it the law that causes sin? *Certainly not*, answers Paul to this rhetorical question. A ray of light that shines into the den of a beast of prey, is not creating the dangerous animal – it was already there –, the light only shows us its presence.

The purpose of a nerve is not to make life difficult, but rather to warn us from a threatening disease (like leprosy). The more the divine light (God's law, his Word) shines into the dark nature of our hearts, the more we recognise the activity (and reality) of sin.

Rom 7:8 *But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire...*

The law is not creating sin, it rather reveals the sin that is already there (cf. Rom 3:20; 7:7). On the other hand, it is actually the case, that a given rule may provoke desires or a certain curiosity. Take for instance a child, whom his mother has forbidden to go to a nearby river. If mother had not said anything, the child would not even have thought of approaching the (for the child dangerous) water. But the warning awakened its curiosity in the first place. The child wants to find out, what is the nature of the thing that has been forbidden by mother. Not by accident the proverb says: *stolen apples taste better than bought ones...* A law may tickle the curiosity of man. If man transgresses (oversteps) this law (and this has consequences), it does not mean, that the law as such is bad; the evil comes, because man is misusing the law.

10 b.) Temptation

We have seen above that the tempter's goal is to drive us to act against the will of God, i.e. to sin.

6. Imputation of (hereditary) sin

A quick glance is enough to make us realise the "omnipresence" of sin. Evil is a universal problem. As stated: Scripture testifies to the universality of sin: Gen 8:21; 1Ki 8:46; Psa 143:2; Ecc 7:20; Luk 11:13; Rom 3:10.12.23; Gal 3:22; Jam 3:2; 1Jo 1:8 etc. Are we not often pleading (excusing ourselves) with the famous sentence "*Nobody is perfect!*"? Actually, since the fall of the first two people all men sin, because they all have a sinful nature. While it is true, that we have not committed the same sin as our forefather Adam (cf. Rom 5:14), this does not change the fact, that all of us are sinners by nature (Eph 2:3), since our birth (Psa 51:7). But why have we been born as sinners? Together with Thiessen we pose the question: how is it that we are made responsible for a corrupt nature, which we have not caused ourselves (personally, consciously)? How can a righteous God make us accountable for the sin of Adam? There are various theories concerning the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity. Thiessen¹⁴⁶ cites six different explanations which have been put forward in the course of Church History. We summarise these theories and at the same time comment on them (the pro and contra).

a.) The Pelagian theory

The British monk Pelagius¹⁴⁷ claimed, that the sin of Adam only affected Adam himself, and that God created each soul directly (see above, on creatianism), in fact, innocent and free of any negative tendencies.¹⁴⁸ Therefore each soul is free to obey God; even like Adam before the fall. God is only accounting those deeds of man that have been done personally and consciously. The only effect of Adam's sin upon his posterity is the one, of having left a bad example. Consequently, man can be saved through the works of the law as well as through the gospel. According to Pelagius, Rom 5:12 just means, that all mankind suffer eternal death, because they sin like their example, Adam. Man is by nature good until the moment he (following the example of Adam) sins. Pelagianism was revived in the 16th century by the Socinians. They were Unitarians (Anti-Trinitarians). The Reformation was not in the end triggered off, because the Church of Rome fell more and more into Pelagianism. In contrast to the claims of Pelagius, Holy Scripture teaches plainly, that the whole of mankind is by nature sinful (Psa 51:7; Rom 5:12; Eph 2:3) and man can only be saved by grace (and not by one's own works: cf. Act 13:38-39; Rom 3:21-23; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:8-9).

¹⁴⁶ Henry C. Thiessen, op. cit., pp. 186-190.

¹⁴⁷ Born around 354 A.D. (?) He presented his heretical doctrine around 409 in Rome and was condemned at the council of Carthage in the year 418. It was especially Augustine, who refuted the doctrine of Pelagius. It is called the *pelagian controversy*. Speaking of *Pelagianism* or of *pelagian influence*, one usually refers to a discussed position, that claims, that man in some way is able and obliged to contribute to his salvation through his own efforts (*own works*).

¹⁴⁸ In other words: he denies hereditary sin.

b.) Semipelagianism

Man is not dead; he is rather *sick, diseased*. In consequence of Adam's transgression all men have lost by nature their original righteousness and are unable to (re)gain this righteousness without the help of God. For the sake of God's own righteousness he will grant a special working of the Holy Spirit to those whose conscience has been awakened. This help from God is enough to counteract the consequences of inherited corruption (sinfulness). If man co-operates with the Holy Spirit (→ synergism), it is possible for him to act in obedience to God. The evil tendencies in man could be called *sin*, but it implies neither guilt nor condemnation. Mankind as a whole is not held accountable for the sin of Adam; rather each individual man's sin is accounted if he knowingly and willingly acquires Adam's bad tendencies.¹⁴⁹ Rom 5:12 then would mean that all men suffer from the consequences of Adam's sin and that all yield to their hereditary sinful nature in their own transgression. Against this position one can also say that passages like Psa 51:7, Eph 2:3, and especially Rom 5:12-19, seem to say that man is by nature sinful. The words in Rom 5:18-19 are especially explicit.

c.) The theory of indirect imputation

This theory teaches that all men are born physically and morally corrupt and that this inherited depravity is the source of all sins and sin as such. The physical corruption was since then passed on by natural propagation from Adam to his descendants. The soul would then be a direct creation of God (see above: *creatianism*) and only infected with sin when it is united with the body. According to this hypothesis, it is only this inherited corruption, which God charges man for (imputes) and this only as a consequence and not as punishment for the sin of Adam. The sin of Adam would then be imputed only indirectly and not directly.¹⁵⁰ We believe on our part, that we have inherited the sinful (corrupt) nature of Adam (cf. Eph 2:3; Psa 51:7) and this nature "automatically" induces us to sin. We do not believe that the soul is created directly at procreation (cf. *creatianism*) and only indirectly becomes sinful when it is united with the body. These theories are not doing justice to the explanations of Paul in Rom 5:18-19 (the comparison between Adam and Christ: the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, as also the sin of Adam was [before] imputed to us). Added to that, this position excludes the concept of substitution (representation), i.e. that someone may be punished for the sin of another. This is exactly what Christ has accomplished on our behalf on the cross (cf. Isa 53:4-12; 2Co 5:21).

d.) The realistic theory

According to this theory the whole human race was actually in Adam when he sinned. Man became corrupt and guilty through and in this first sin and this condition has been passed on to all the posterity of Adam. All of Adam's posterity shares personally and unconsciously in this first act of sin. All men are co-sinners in Adam. Therefore man is rightly held accountable and also his condemnation is not unjust, since he quasi participated in Adam's sin. This theory has the advantage that it does justice to Paul's doctrine of imputation in Rom 5:18-19. Nevertheless, also this position is not without its problems. Among others, the following objections may be raised: Can a man be held accountable for a sin, which does not result from a conscious personal decision (auto determination)? Further, can a man sin before he starts to exist? We refer to Eze 18:20.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Henry Clarence Thiessen, op. cit., p. 187. Thiessen says that Semipelagianism was the interpretation of Arminius, and that this position is also held by the Greek (orthodox) Church, by Methodists (John Wesley) and other Armenians. As will be shown further below in an excursus to questions of *predestination* and *free will*, it seems that Arminius was not really a Semipelagian himself, but rather some of his adherents and followers.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Henri C. Thiessen, op. cit., pp. 187-188. Good arguments against this theory are also found with Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1984), p. 243.

e.) The theory of substitution (representation)

According to this theory Adam is the representative as well as the natural head of the human race. This representative priority is also the basis of the imputation of sin. When Adam sinned, he acted as the representative of the whole human race. God accounted the guilt of the first sin on all, who were represented by Adam, i.e. the whole of mankind. As sin has been accounted to us on the basis of the disobedience of Adam, so thanks to the obedience of Christ, righteousness (*Christ's righteousness*) may also be accounted to us (cf. Rom 5:19). This position is mostly held by proponents of the *federal-theology* (*covenant-theology*).¹⁵¹ Adam has concluded with God a *covenant- of-works* and spoken and acted in the name of the whole human race.¹⁵² The difference between the realistic theory (d) and the theory of representation (e) consists of the following: in the latter, it is Adam, who is the (human) head of the covenant and sin is accounted to his posterity, while in the former (i.e. the *realistic theory*) the whole of mankind has effectively co-sinned in Adam. If we had to choose between the two positions we would prefer the *representation-theory*. But even that is not without difficulties: It also cannot answer the following objection: Can a man be held responsible for the breaking of a covenant, which he has not ratified himself? The suffering of the consequences of sin of another is one thing, but can someone be held guilty for the sin of another? Added to that, the analogy between Adam and Christ is not altogether parallel: while it is possible that someone is saved through the obedience of another, nobody can be disobedient on the behalf of others, so that they get lost. In other words: it is possible that someone endures on my behalf the punishment which I deserve; but it is impossible to sin on behalf of someone else (otherwise, both would then sin). In our estimation, both, the realistic theory, and the representation-theory are connected with seemingly insurmountable problems.

f.) The corporate theory

This theory takes a kind of mediating position between the above named, as it includes the concept of representation as well as the one of a natural connection to our forefather Adam. This view insists on a close relation between the individual and the group to which it belongs. Each individual may act as a representative of a group (cf. for instance Achan and his family in Jos 7:24-26). In brief, this theory argues, that the sin of Adam is accounted (imputed) on the basis of a corporate concept. Thiessen holds that Paul in Rom 5 applies the Hebrew concept of racial solidarity, but also points out that the position of corporatism is riddled more or less with the same problems: there is the problem of an "arbitrary" imputation (accounting of guilt) as in the *theory of representation* (i.e. *federal-theory*) as well as the problem of unwilling and unconscious co-operation in the sin of Adam that we find in the *realistic theory*.

g.) Evaluation of these theories

Thiessen thinks that the arguments move somehow between the *realistic-theory* and the *representation-theory* pointing towards a mediating position. He further points to the suggestion made by some, according to which the parallel between the imputation of sin (caused by Adam) and the imputation of righteousness (fulfilled by Christ: cf. Rom 5:18-20) should not really be seen as a parallel; the imputation of righteousness must be understood in a forensic way, whereas the

¹⁵¹ This is a particular line of reformed theology, which builds its doctrine of faith on the different covenants between God and man. One of the best known proponents of this theology was the Dutchman Joh. Coccejus († 1669). Compare for instance Louis Berkhof, op. cit., pp. 211-213.

¹⁵² Federal theology stipulates that Adam in sinning broke the covenant that he had entered with God, and so came under the condition of condemnation. But God in his love offers in Jesus Christ grace to man (the sacrifices of the Old Testament being a shadow of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ [a so-called *pre-figuration*]). This is the covenant of grace. Through sin man was spoiled (corrupted) and is no more able to do the good by his own. He can only be saved by grace. Federalism is so far plausible, but it has to be said, that Holy Scripture does not speak explicitly of a covenant (of works) which God supposedly concluded with Adam.

imputation of Adam's disobedience must be seen in a personal and inherent way. Thiessen grants that the fact remains, that through the disobedience of Adam all became sinners and that thanks to the obedience of Christ the believer is justified. The Scripture does not totally explain, how this has happened, but that it is a fact.¹⁵³

We quite agree with this conclusion of Thiessen. On the other hand we are not totally satisfied. We want to return again to the question of parallelism between the *imputation of sin* and the *accounting of righteousness*. There are reasons for this. The position of Thiessen is in our opinion objective and balanced. He is neither a Pelagian, nor a Semipelagian, and he is also not a Calvinist. His position has to be placed in the middle.¹⁵⁴ This is the reason, why he not only shows how the positions of *Pelagianism*, of *Semipelagianism* and *indirect imputation* are in more than one way in conflict with biblical doctrine; he also scrutinizes the *realistic position* as well as the *federal-theology (theory of representation)* and *corporatism*.

Pelagianism with its denial of hereditary sin is clearly heretical. In contrast to the Pelagian theory, man is not by nature good. He is born a sinner (Psa 51:7). It is not necessary to belabour this point any further (see above). *Semipelagianism* ignores that also the will of man is affected by the corruption of man. Man – by himself – does not seek God. He rather flees from him. And even if God touches him by his Spirit, this does not change the fact that a man, not born again, can in no way work together (collaborate) with the Holy Spirit, as the Semipelagians claim. The Bible rather shows plainly, that man is very well a sinner in Adam and the only thing he can do, is to accept without any merit on his side, the grace which God offers in Jesus Christ. Concerning the theory of indirect imputation; it is for the following reasons not acceptable: it presupposes creatianism (*a direct creation of the soul*) and not traducianism.

Speaking of the *realistic*, the *federalist* and the *corporative* positions; they are all basically confronted with the objection: **Is it just to hold a man guilty on account of a sin, which he has not committed himself?** We remind ourselves of the passage in **Eze 18:20**. The three above-mentioned positions cannot really answer this objection. Actually we are also unable to do so, **but...**

Calvinists, i.e. Predestinarians normally support the position of *federalism (theory of representation)* or the *corporate-theory*. For them it is clear: the guilt of the first sin is imputed on all descendants of Adam. For us, we have to admit, that the statements in **Rom 5:18-19** seem to support this, even if this seems to our thinking something like a thorn in the flesh. **But between our position and the one of the Calvinists, there is an important difference.** We will try to illustrate this with a little fictive story of a man, who has to appear before the throne of God. Before we do that, we want to briefly summarise and comment on the different theories (i.e. *hypotheses* or *positions*) mentioned above as to the questions of: **predestination, the free will, the fall and of hereditary sin.** The presentation of the various positions will be chronological: starting with the “extreme” of *supralapsarian determinism* and ending with the “extreme” of *Pelagianism*:

h.) Excursus: *Predestination or free will*

The various positions concerning the questions of predestination, free will, the fall and hereditary sin:

(1) Supralapsarianism

¹⁵³ Compare: Henry C. Thiessen, op. cit., p. 190.

¹⁵⁴ See his position on election. He is of the opinion, that election is based on *foreknowledge* (of the faith of the one saved) of God and not on a *pre-determination*. Compare: ibid., pp. 262-263. We ourselves tend also towards this position (see below).

Supralapsarianism: (*supra* = above, before; *lapsus* = fall): This concerns the decrees (decisions) which God appointed before the foundation of the world: (1) God decreed (decided) to elect some men and to reject others; (2) Then God decreed to create both (those who would be elected as well as those who would be rejected [cast away]); (3) God decreed to allow the fall; (4) The decree to ensure the salvation of (only) the elect (through Christ). Well known supporters of this position (also called: *double predestination*) are: Theodore de Beza (1519-1605; pupil and successor of Calvin in Geneva) and Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641; Professor of theology in Leiden, Netherlands). Scholars still contend whether Calvin was an Infra- or Supralapsarian, the reason being, that his statements are not altogether coherent. It seems that Calvin was a Supralapsarian in the beginning, but later came rather to a position of Infralapsarianism – his later writings seem to support that (cp above). The exponents of an unconditional election, i.e. predestination (positions A, B, C) cite especially passages like Rom 9:11ff and Eph 1:4-11.

(2) Infralapsarianism

Infralapsarianism: (*infra* = below, afterwards; some prefer the expression *Sublapsarianism*. *Sub* also means *below*): (1) God decreed to create; (2) God decreed to allow the fall; (3) God decreed to elect some (4) God decreed to ensure salvation for the elect (i.e. through Christ). This doctrine is also called: single predestination. Infra- as well as Supralapsarianism presupposes the following five dogmas (referred to as “5-point-Calvinism”): (1) The unconditional election, i.e. predestination; (2) Jesus died only for the elect (English: *limited atonement*; Latin term: *expiatio definitiva*); (3) Grace (i.e. the saving grace of God, for the elect only) is irresistible (Latin: *gratia irresistibilis*); (4) The elect cannot lose their salvation (i.e. *the perseverance of the saints*; Latin: *perseverantia sanctorum*); (5) The total corruption (i.e. sinfulness of all men; English expression: *total inability* [or *depravity*]; Latin: *depravatio tota*). At the synod of Doordrecht in the Netherlands (1618-1619) the majority of Calvinists voted for infralapsarianism. Theologians of modern times like Loraine Boettner, Van Til and Henri Blocher may be counted among them (Neo-Calvinists).

(3) Amyraldism

Amyraldism: Moïse Amyraut (Latin name: Amyraldus), French professor at the Huguenot Seminary of Saumur († 1664), held to (Augustinian-Calvinistic) predestination but not the doctrine of *expiatio definitiva*, i.e. he only supported 4 of the 5 points of Calvinism. Amyraut taught (1634) a *hypothetical universalism*: By a hypothetical decree God appointed salvation for all man, if they believe; but through a further decree, only a certain number of men become the objects of his grace. For strict Calvinists this *hypothetical universalism* is an untenable concession. In fact, one has to ask if it is not absurd to think, that God has decided that his Son should die for all mankind, but he decrees at the same time to elect only some people, i.e. to give them the necessary saving faith.

(4) Election is based on the foreknowledge of God

Election (i.e. predestination) is based on the foreknowledge of God: (1) God decreed to create; (2) God decided to allow the (hypothetical) fall (as a result of a free decision of the will) of his creature; (3) God decreed to create salvation through his Son; (4) God decreed to make salvation effectual in those, of whom he knew beforehand (Rom 8:29-30; 1Pe 1:1-2; cf. Ps 139:16), that they would accept the offer of grace in Jesus Christ. Election is not unconditional but dependant on faith which God knows beforehand, as he knows everything in advance. *Foreknow* (Greek:

προγινώσκω [*proginōskō*]) is not the same as *predetermine* (Greek: προορίζω [*prohorízō*]). It is to be noted, that as in positions A, B and C here also, salvation is seen as a pure *gift of grace* in Christ, i.e. without any merit on the side of man (no synergism; faith is not a work, but the gift of God through which man can receive salvation in Christ). The difference to the positions A and B especially are, that grace is not irresistible but can be rejected (cf. for instance Mat 23:37 and Luk 7:30). It is further denied, that Jesus should only have died for the elect (against the *expiatio definitiva*). Jesus has rather died for all men (1Jo 2:1-2; cf. 1Ti 2:4), even for heretics, whom the work of salvation does not help, since they deny the one who has redeemed them (2Pe 2:1). This position also holds (like A, B, C) the so-called *perseverantia sanctorum* (perseverance of the saints), i.e., that the really born again Christians will not lose their salvation (cf. Phi 1:6; Joh 10:28 etc.). If he gets entangled with sin, he will/may only lose his reward (1Co 3:14-15). This position is held by Thiessen (we also tend in this direction). It accepts only two points of the so-called “5-point-Calvinism”, namely the inability, i.e. sinfulness of all man (*depravatio tota*) and the *perseverance of all the elect* (*perseverantia sanctorum*).

(5) Arminianism

Arminianism: The Dutchman Arminius (his real name was Jacob Hermans; pupil among others of Theodore de Beza in Geneva) was commissioned to prove, whether Holy Scripture supports the supra- or infralapsarian position. Arminius came to the conclusion, lined out in position D. When he became as well as Gomarus, a professor in Leiden, he opposed the same in public. Arminius died 1609 and so could not participate in the synod of Doordrecht (1618-1619) where Arminianism was condemned by the Calvinists. The successors of Arminius tended more to the position, that salvation could be lost (Arminius himself did not express a clear position on this question). Of “5-point-Calvinism” only the total sinfulness (*depravatio tota*) of all men is retained. It should be mentioned, that within this position there are again different “shades” (see for instance Wesleyans).

(6) Semipelagianism

Semipelagianism: (half-Pelagianism): Soon after Pelagianism was condemned, a new controversy arose, that of *Semipelagianism* (429 to ca. 529 A. D.). Monks from Massilia (the abbot Johannes Cassianus) and Lerinum (the monk Vicentius) opposed the Augustinian doctrine of predestination, but in a more moderate way than Pelagius previously (see G). They were initially called *Massilians* (= *habitants of Marseille*): Only since the 16th century (since the Reformation) one speaks of a semipelagian position. *Semipelagians* say that while the human will has been weakened by sin, the disposition towards the good has remained intact. Man is not dead, he is only sick! Therefore divine grace is necessary, but the free will (Latin: *liberum arbitrium*) of man and grace work together (man cooperates in justification → *synergism*). God has destined man to salvation in pre-knowledge of man’s perseverant faith. In this position salvation or damnation is dependent upon man himself.

(7) Pelagianism

Pelagianism: As mentioned, they are named after the British monk Pelagius († 418), who is known for his dispute with Augustine (the *pelagian controversy*). Pelagius denied hereditary sin and advocated the full freedom of will. Through virtue man needs to prove himself worthy of grace. Christ is the perfect example for man, which he must imitate to attain salvation.

End of excursus

Illustration

- 5 On judgement day a man stands before the throne of God. The verdict is announced: You are lost in your sins and therefore destined to eternal damnation. The accused argues: It is true that I have sinned, but actually this is not my own fault, because I have already been born as a sinner and therefore I could not behave differently than to sin. Your own Word, o God, confirms *there is no one righteous, not even one . . . all have sinned* (cf. Rom 3:10.23). They cannot do differently¹⁵⁵,
 10 for they all are descendants of the one and same man and all have inherited his sinful nature (cf. Rom 8:7; Jer 13:23). God answers: This is true! The accused continues his plea: In your Word it says, that the soul, that sins, will die (**cf. Eze 18:20**). Adam's sin was not my fault; consciously I was not even there; I may have been in some genetic form in the loins of Adam (cf. Heb 7:3-10). If I had had the same possibility as Adam, I agree then I would deserve this condemnation. But
 15 possibly I might have resisted the temptation of the serpent. Adam, not living at that time under the dominion of evil, had at least the possibility to resist evil. But I am already born a sinner. Why was I not asked whether I wanted to be born in the first place? I have not asked to be conceived, i.e. to be born. Under such negative circumstances, I certainly would have refused to be born. For man the game is already lost, even before he starts to live. Also for this I simply cannot be blamed. If I
 20 had at least been born holy, like the first man, created good and holy... But now I have been born, without the power to resist evil. And now I should pay the debt of another? What injustice! At the same time you claim to be just! God answered: You are putting up a good defence, my creature! It is true, your parents did not ask you at the time of procreation, and it is also true that it is not directly your fault that the first man sinned and that you are born a sinner. But don't forget the
 25 following: The case with you man is not the same as that of the angels. Angels are not a race, they are a troop. They are not multiplying through procreation like man. Lucifer and those among the angels, who joined him in his rebellion against me, they are all lost, because they have consciously and wilfully rebelled against me. Because of this, hell is prepared for them (**Mat 25:41**). But you, my dear human being, consider that hell is not prepared for man. With you it is different. You are a
 30 race. When the first man listened to the voice of Satan, he became a sinner. His whole nature has been corrupted by sin. And you – as a descendant of him – actually inherited his sinful nature. This is true, but don't forget, that I didn't leave man alone in his condition of lost-ness. I was the one, seeking and calling him, when he had sinned (Gen 3:8-9) and was trying to hide from me. I also promised him to send a saviour (Gen 3:15). Whoever believes my promise can escape condemnation (cf. Joh 3:16.36; 1Jo 5:11-13). Think about people like Abraham, Rahab, Ruth, and David, they trusted, that the promised redeemer would come... or about Paul, Valdo, Hus, Luther, Zinzendorf, Wesley and others; they believed, that my Son Jesus Christ came into the world as
 35 their redeemer. Have I not forgiven, even David, though he was guilty – born like you, a sinner by nature – of adultery and murder (cf. 2Sa 11–12)? But David believed in my Word and repented. I sent my Son into the world to save man, paying on the cross the price for the sin of the whole world, i.e. of Adam and all his descendants (cf. Joh 1:29; 1Jo 2:1-2). Why have you not believed? Why did you not accept the offer of my grace? You are not only lost, because you were born as a sinner and because you have yourself sinned... no! You are going to hell because you did not want to be saved! Suddenly there is silence before the throne of God. The accused also ceases to speak.
 40 He has nothing to reply, because he knows, that he refused the salvation in Jesus Christ. He comes to himself and can only say: What a fool I have been! His pride had refused the offer of grace, and he did not want to receive Christ as his Lord and Saviour, because he wished to remain in his sinful life and he didn't want to repent (cf. Joh 3:16-20).

¹⁵⁵ Compare to the so-called: *non posse non peccare!*

In other words: Men, who go to hell, are not going there because they have in advance been appointed to that destiny or because they had no choice... no, they also go there, because they chose so, refusing saving grace. **“Those who go to hell choose it!”** (C. S. Lewis).

5 Admittedly (hypothesis!), **if** we all went to hell solely because of the sin of the first man, without having the least chance to escape this verdict or fate, then at the arrival in hell we would all rush at Adam and beat him up for having brought us into this bad condition. All men, suffering in hell, would constantly repeat this sentence: “Oh God, why did you not give us at least the chance you gave to Adam? Why are you punishing us for **his** fault?”

10 Now, this is not the case. God did not leave man without the possibility of salvation. Redemption is offered to all. **But** what happens to the hypothesis of those, who claim that Jesus did not die for all men, but only for the elect, whom God in his love has chosen for eternal life? **Calvinists** claim that Christ died only for the elect (*expiatio definitiva*). The logic of their doctrine of predestination forces them to this position, because it would be a contradiction, if God’s decree from eternity predestined (only) some men (namely, the elect) for eternal life (leaving the others in their sin), but then allowing his Son to die for all men. **Amyraldism** implies exactly this contradiction. So it is understandable when Calvinists accuse Amyrault and his followers of making a (for Calvinism) dangerous concession with their doctrine of **hypothetical universalism**.¹⁵⁶ Returning to the story of the man before the throne of God... Let us suppose (as Calvinists do) that Jesus did not die for all men, but only for those whom the Father in advance elected (chose) for eternal life. God then could not really answer this man, who accuses him of injustice. Man then could reply: No, I was born a sinner, this is not my fault and I just had the bad luck to belong to those on whom you have decided, that they will be lost in the sin they have inherited from Adam. If you are love, as you claim, why have you loved only the chosen ones? Why have you not chosen to grant your grace also to me? Even if grace is no merit or right, is it not unjust to offer it to some and not to others also? You are saying in your Word that you are no respecter of persons... but what else is this than **the preference of persons**? Those privileged ones, whom you have chosen, in what respect are they better than the ones you allow to get lost? You are saying yourself that they are chosen before the foundation of the world, i.e. before they were able to do something good or bad (cf. Rom 9:10-11). Why, only them and not also the others? Is this justice?

In our view the doctrine, according to which Jesus only died for the elect (*expiatio definitiva*), is untenable. It implies among other things that God is lastly a God of love only for “his” elect and not for the others (for these others he would then be merely a “just” God [if at all!]). Holy Scripture says that God loved the whole world (cf. Joh 3:16) and still loves it. Against the doctrine that the substitute sacrificial death of Christ should be limited to the elect, consult passages like Joh 1:29; Col 1:19-20; 1Ti 2:3-4; 1Jo 2:1-2; 2Pe 2:1; 3:9. The Father is not only drawing the elect to himself, as the Calvinists usually argue, citing Joh 6:37.44. Jesus says very clearly that when he will be lifted up (on the cross), he would draw all men to himself (Joh 12:32)... with the reservation that only those will come to him, who follow his calling, i.e. who accept his invitation. Many are called, but few are chosen (Mat 22:14). Chosen are all those of whom God knew in advance (from all eternity) that they would believe. Chosen in Christ (Eph 1:4) are those of whom God knew in advance that they would answer his call. Concerning God’s pre-knowledge (πρόγνωσις [prógnōsis]), which precedes predestination (verb προορίζω [prohorítsō] = to destine in advance; compare the substantive πρόθεσις [próthesis] = decision, plan in Rom 8:28; Eph 3:11) we have reflected above. We remind again of Rom 8:29-30: *Pre-knowledge* comes before *pre-destination*!

¹⁵⁶ Compare this to the Neo-Calvinist J.-M. Nicole, *Précis d'Histoire de l'Eglise*, 5^e éd. (Nogent-sur-Marne, France: Editions de l'Institut Biblique de Nogent, 1990), p. 193: "En revanche, les théologiens de Saumur, Amyrault († 1664), La Place († 1658) apportaient de dangereuses atténuations au calvinisme rigide."

At this point we need to return once more to the key-passage concerning hereditary sin: Rom 5:12-21. In reference to the substitute sacrificial death of Christ, this passage is clear. His work of justification should become available to all. The statement in Rom 5:12 is hard, but in face of the plain declaration of Holy Scripture, the evangelical Christian has to concede that in Adam all men are sinners. It is true that the statement: "...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..." in Rom 5:14 could be explained in a way that we are only sinners, because we have inherited the sinful nature of Adam, and this sinful nature causes us automatically to sin also. So we would not be guilty of the first sin of Adam as such, but only of the sins we commit ourselves. But the analogy of Rom 5:18-19 rather seems to suggest that we have not only inherited the sinful nature of Adam, but that also his disobedience has been accounted/imputed to us. We repeat: if this was all... everyone lost because of the (one) sin of Adam... this would be difficult to accept. But the text clearly says that, as through the sin of one man (the first Adam cf. 1Co 15:45) all have been condemned, so also through the righteous act of the other (namely, the second Adam) righteousness comes to all mankind. Calvinists insist in this context on the expression *the many* (οἱ πολλοί [*hoi polloi*]) in Rom 5:19, to make the text say that the righteousness attained through Christ is only for the elect. The fact that Rom 5:18 speaks of *all men* (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους [*eis pantas anthrōpous*] = *for/to all men*), pleads against this claim. The expression "*all*" occurs in both entities in an analogous way: (1) concerning the condemnation because of disobedience in the one and (2) concerning righteousness as consequence of the other. It would be inconsistent to claim that the reference concerning the condemnation of *all men* applies actually to all men, whereas the reference concerning justification for *all men* should only apply to the elect. This seems to be an extreme, which we should avoid; but there is another extreme of which we should also stay away from – it stands diametrically opposed to the *expiatio definitiva*: that is the doctrine of *classical universalism*, also called *reconciliation of all*. This theory claims that Jesus saved *de facto* all men. Damnation and hell do not exist. Universalists actually base their doctrine of reconciliation of all (*apokatástasis*; Greek: ἀποκατάστασις) on Bible-passages like Rom 5:18-19 and especially Col 1:19-20. Admittedly, if one only considers passages like Rom 5:18-20 and Col 1:19-20, it is tempting to lean to the position of the universalism, i.e. *the reconciliation of all*... but certainly not to the one of *expiatio definitiva*. The problem is that the proponents of this doctrine (universalism) commit the mistake typical of all heresies: namely, to propose a doctrine based on few and isolated Bible-texts, ignoring the context. There are in fact so many passages saying, that Jesus paid the ransom for all men, but at the same time it is shown that it profits only those who accept this offer: cf. 2Pe 2:1; Mat 23:37; Luk 7:30. **2Co 5:18-21 provides us with the necessary arguments to refute classical universalism as well as the Calvinistic expiatio definitiva (limited atonement):** (1) God not only died for the elect, no! In Jesus Christ he reconciled the whole world with himself (see verse 19a; cf. Col 1:19-20; these speak against the Calvinistic *expiatio definitiva*). (2) This does not mean by far that one is automatically saved, that all men are automatically saved... no! Only those are saved, who accept to be saved by God: compare the words of the apostle Paul in **2Co 5:20: "be reconciled with God"** i.e. "*allow yourself to be reconciled with God.*"¹⁵⁷ On our part, we advocate the so-called *hypothetical universalism*. This is the position supported by most Evangelicals: **Jesus has died for all men; his death is sufficient for all, but it is only effective for those, who accept him personally.**

In conclusion: We have inherited the sinful nature from Adam and in him we are counted as sinners. But, because God does not want that man should perish, he has taken care of a possibility of salvation. Christ died for the sins of all men, but man needs to receive this gift. God is not forcing this gift on man. Instead of accusing God for accounting (imputing) Adam's sin to us, we would do better to praise him for his endless love in giving his only Son for us. Certainly, Adam's rebellion in Eden was a scandal, but the (undeserved) death of God's Son on the cross on our

¹⁵⁷ In Greek: καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ (*katallágēte tō Theō*): καταλλάγητε = Aor. 2, 2nd person singular, imperative passive of καταλλάσσω (*katallássō*).

behalf was an even greater scandal. God bore this scandal for our good. How can we do other than to thank him? To reject this gift is actually what the Bible calls the *sin against the Holy Spirit...* (cf. Mat 12:31; Heb 10:26-29; 1Jo 5:16). Only this sin cannot be forgiven, because there is no other sacrifice than the one offered by the Son of God, through which the sin of man can be atoned for. Therefore we love him, because he first loved us (1Jo 4:19).

C. Sins

Sins (actions) are committed because of sin (character):

Rom 7:17 *As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.*

Holy Scripture explains with different pictures/illustrations and expressions what sin does in us. Hebrew as well as Greek language knows different words to illustrate the diversity of sin.

1. Scripture uses different expressions for sin

The first word for sin in the Bible is:

a.) Sin, missing the goal (Gen 4:7)

In the Hebrew text it's the word **חָטָא** (*khaṭṭā* 't), from the root **חָטָא** (*khāṭā* 't), which means mainly *to miss, to sin*. Sin consists in the fact that man misses the goal, which God has set for him:

Gen 4:7 *If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin [khaṭṭā 't] is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.*

In the New Testament the Greek verb **ἀστοχέω** (*astokhéō*) has the meaning of *wander away*:

1Ti 1:6 *Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk...*

2Ti 2:18 *...who have wandered away from the truth...*

The second word for sin is:

b.) Transgression, sin, iniquity, guilt, punishment (Gen 4:13)

In Hebrew the noun **עָוֹן** (*'āwōn*), from the verb **עָוָה** (*'āwāh*), which may be translated with *acting wrongly* or *missing the right*, in the sense of transgressing against God's will. The corresponding Greek substantive is **παραβάσις** (*parabásis* = *violation/offence*) and the verb **παραβαίνω** (*parabaínō* = *to deviate from the way, to transgress, to violate*) or the substantive **παράπτωμα** (*paráptōma* = *transgression, mistake, etc.*) and the verb **παραπίπτω** (*parapíptō* = *to fall away, to deviate*):

Gen 4:13 *Cain said to the Lord: My punishment is greater than I can bear!*

Isa 53:6 *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and Yahweh has laid on him the iniquity ['āwōn] of us all.*

Rom 4:15 ...where there is no law there is no transgression.¹⁵⁸

Rom 5:17 For if, by the trespass¹⁵⁹ of the one man, death reigned through that one man...

Eph 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions¹⁶⁰ and sins...

The meaning is *to deviate from the straight way*. This expression characterises the rebellious, apostate and/or unfaithful man.

Psa 32:5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.

Also the following passage is to be understood in this way:

Gal 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin...

c.) Evil, malice (Gen 6:5)

The Hebrew (feminine) substantive רָעָה (*rā'āh*), from the verb רָעָה I (*rā'a*'), means *evil, badness, maliciousness etc.* In Gen 6:1ff it says that this was the general condition of mankind before the flood. The corresponding Greek word is κακία (*kakía*),¹⁶¹ which is translated as *evil, maliciousness, badness*. Concerning our past we read:

Tit 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

d.) Sin, the mistake

The general expression for *sin* in the Greek New Testament is the feminine substantive ἡ ἁμαρτία (*hamartía*); the verb ἁμαρτάνω (*hamartánō*) means: *to err, to be mistaken, to fail*, i.e. in a general sense *to sin*. The masculine adjective or substantive ἁμαρτωλός (*hamartōlós*) means *sinful*, respectively *sinner* or *sinful man*.

e.) Unrighteousness

In Greek the feminine substantive ἀδικία (*adikía*): the word is constructed from the privative affix "α" (the so-called privative alpha) and the adjective δίκαιος (*díkaios*). ἄδικος (*adikos*) means *unrighteous/unjust* or *evil*: cf. Mat 5:45; Luk 16:10; the verb ἀδικέω (*[adikéō]* = *to be unjust, to act unjustly*): see Act 25:11; Mat 20:13 etc.

f.) Lawlessness

In Greek: the feminine substantive ἀνομία (*anómia*). The word consists of the privative affix "α" and the masculine substantive νόμος (*nómos* = *law*). *Anómia* means literally *that which is without/against the law*, that which is not in harmony with the law. It speaks of a condition of anomaly. This word probably expresses best the true character of sin and of evil: Sin is all that which is not in conformity with the Word of God. In our modern translations the Greek word

¹⁵⁸ In Greek we find the word: παράβασις (*parábasis*).

¹⁵⁹ In Greek we find the word: παράπτωμα (*paráptōma*).

¹⁶⁰ In the Greek text we find the plural *paraptōmata* (in the dative τοῖς παραπτώμασιν).

¹⁶¹ Feminine substantive derived from the adjective κακός (*kakós* = *bad, evil, etc.*).

ἀνομία (*anomia*) often is translated as *sin* or *unrighteousness*. It is of course true, that which is against the law (i.e. illegal; in Greek ἄνομος = *anomos*) is at the same time *unjust, sinful*. It is to be noted that the word ἄνομος means not only *lawless* and *against the law*; in the substantive and with an article it can also stand for the Antichrist, the *lawless-one* par excellence. It is significant that in 2Th 2:8 Paul calls the Antichrist ὁ ἄνομος (*ho anomos*), after he spoke in the previous verse of the *mystery of lawlessness* (τὸ μυστήριον τῆς ἀνομίας = *to mystērion tēs anomías*), using the same word/root. It is true, that sin will reach its climax under the Antichrist. In Dan 7:25 (the little horn of the beast with the 10 horns) it says that he will try to change times and laws (cf. Rev 13). Instead of submitting to God, he will try to introduce his own laws. This will be the peak of sin and rebellion against God. Finally the Antichrist will demand that men should worship him as god: cf. 2Th 2:4; Rev 13:15. In this sense the expression *anomia* (*lawlessness*) illustrates fittingly, what sin is: everything that stands not in conformity with the law, i.e. all that which does not correspond with the will of God; in short all that is *a-normal* (cf. *anomaly: deviation from the normal, against the rule*, etc.).

15 g.) Unbelief or unfaithfulness

In the Greek N. T. the feminine substantive ἀπιστία (*apistía*) and the adjective ἄπιστος (*apistos*) may be translated: *unbelieving/faithless* or *unfaithful*; as substantive: *unbeliever* or *unfaithful person*. The corresponding verb is ἀπιστέω (*apistéō* = *to be unbelieving* or *to be unfaithful*). The opposite of *apistía* is *faith*; also a feminine substantive, just without the privative alpha as affix: ἡ πίστις (*pístis*); also in analogy to the verb πιστεύω (*pisteúō* = *to believe*). The corresponding word in Hebrew for *faith, faithfulness, trust* is אָמֵן ('*omen*); the same root in vocalised form, 'āmēn (אָמֵן) means *true, truly, certainly*. In the *Hiphil-stem* this verbal root can signify *to have confidence, to be certain, to believe*.¹⁶² From this root our "*amen*" at the end of a prayer is derived. If we conclude our prayer with *amen*, it means that we agree with what has just been prayed (*so be it!*). This word-stem appears in the Old Testament for the first time in Gen 15:6 in connection with Abraham and his faith.¹⁶³ It is not by accident, that Gen 15:6 is cited in Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6 and in Jam 2:23. This word-stem (namely the feminine substantive אֱמוּנָה = '*mūnāh: faith*) also occurs in the famous passage in Hab 2:4, which is cited in the New Testament in Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11 and in Heb 10:38. Sin means in the last analysis to have no *pístis*, i.e. '*mūnāh* or '*omen*, or *no faith in God*:

30 **Mat 13:58** *And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.*¹⁶⁴

The substantive form is used seldom; it is especially the verb *to believe* or *not to believe* which occurs mostly:

35 **Joh 16:9** *...in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me.*¹⁶⁵

Because of the sin of unbelief, man is lost:

40 **Col 3:6** *Because of these, the wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience.*¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² This also applies to the (analogue) Aramaic *aphel-form* (אָמַן ['*a-man*]).

¹⁶³ וַיִּאֱמָן בַּיהוָה (and he trusted Yahweh...).

¹⁶⁴ In the Greek text: διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν (because of their unbelief).

¹⁶⁵ In the Greek text: οὐ πιστεύουσιν (they did not believe).

¹⁶⁶ In the Greek text: ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας (on the children of disobedience). The feminine substantive ἀπειθεία means *disobedience*, the verb ἀπειθέω accordingly *to be disobedient*. The verb ἀπειθέω occurs in Joh 3:36: ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον· ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν τῷ υἱῷ οὐκ ὄψεται ζωὴν (he who *believes* in the Son, has eternal life, he who does not *obey* the Son will not see life...). Some Bible-translations render both participles in this verse (ὁ πιστεύων and ὁ ἀπειθῶν) with *he who believes*. In most translations the second participle is better translated with, *he who does not obey* (or *to be disobedient*). It would read then: "*whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever*

1Jo 5:10-13 ...Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son...

5 Unbelief is *the rejection of the gift of heavenly riches by an undeserving beggar*. Next to the expressions named above, the Bible lists many individual sins. Here some passages, where these lists are found: Mar 7:20-22; Rom 1:29-31; 1Co 5:11; 6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 4:19-5:5; Rev 21:8; 22:15. Most of the sins quoted have some connection to sexual sins: especially *adultery* and *fornication*.

10 2. Differences between individual sins

a.) There are different kinds of sins

- *Sins of thought*
- *Sins of words*
- *Sins of deeds*
- 15 • *Sins of omission*

In his *sermon on the mount*, Jesus taught that before God there is no difference in the essence, i.e. the character of different sins: cf. Mat 5:22 (*he who says...*); Mat 5:28 (*he who desires...*). *Sin* always remains *sin* and becomes only more condemnable through the law (cf. Jam 2:10).

20 b.) Sins are committed against different “objects”

Many people and people-groups think that sin is only a matter of human relations. Man is only sinning against his neighbour. The Bible rather teaches that all **sins committed against man are at the same time an insult against God**, because God is the Creator of all men. If a creature sins against another creature, it sins at the same time against the Creator.

25 **Num 5:6** *When a man or woman wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the LORD, that person is guilty...*

Compare with sacrifices in the book of **Leviticus**:

30 **Lev 6:2** *If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving his neighbour about something entrusted to him or left in his care or stolen, or if he cheats him...*

35 Compare with the words of Joseph (Gen 39:9) and David (Psa 51:6). In other words, there are sins against God and sins against man; but ultimately all sins are at the same time sins against God. See the confession of the prodigal son:

40 **Luk 15:21** *Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.*

Impulse for thought:

does not obey/reject the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. " From this we could draw the following theological résumé: Faith without obedience is an illusion. Joh 3:36 could be interpreted as the summary of the doctrine in Jam 2:14-26 or the words of Jesus in Mat 7:15-23.

Speaking of forgiveness, increasingly and very often questions concerning repentance, confession, and restitution (settlement) are neglected. Yet Holy Scripture speaks about these matters: cf. Lev 6:4-5 (others 5:23); Num 5:7 and Luk 19:8. A sin is not settled simply by addressing God with a confession, especially if the sin has been committed against another person. Genuine penitence should include a readiness for reparation. Under the old covenant, restitution was to be made at least to the amount of the committed wrong (i.e. the damage caused). It is clear, that a man killed cannot be replaced (compensated). But a stolen amount for instance, can be given back to the original owner, if he is known. *Without confession, there is no forgiveness*, says Holy Scripture (Pro 28:13). We have to be prepared to confess our sins (1Jo 1:9). God, who sees our hearts, knows whether our contrition is genuine. If it is serious, this will show itself in a readiness to confess our sins and (depending on the case) a willingness to make restitution – as far as this is possible. *Reconciliation* means in essence a *restoration of the original condition*. Would it be enough to speak of *restoration of the original condition*, after confessing (with ones lips) a theft to God, but at the same time keeping the stolen goods, even if the rightful owner is known? Is such lip-service of any value to the harmed party?

The Bible also speaks of sins committed against one's own person, i.e. sin against one's own self.

1Co 6:18 *...he who sins sexually sins against his own body*

Passages like 1Co 6:18-20 (cf. 1Co 3:16) show that man is responsible for his own body. The believer should no more sin with or against his body because he has been redeemed (bought with a price) through Jesus Christ and so no more belongs to himself. Fornication would be a sin (sexual offence) against one's own body, which is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who indwells the believer. In any case, sin is always also sin against God, i.e. guilt before God. Under the Law of Moses therefore, a sacrifice had to be brought for every sin (cf. the book *Leviticus*).

c.) Sins may be committed by different types of persons

- First, there is sin committed by *unbelievers*. As we have shown already, the sinful nature of man produces, quasi automatically, individual sins. For these people there is only one solution: faith in Jesus Christ and repentance (conversion) resulting from faith.

Act 2:37ff *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied: "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins..."*

- Second, there is sin committed by *believers*.

1Jo 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins...*

The Bible also knows something about corporate guilt:

- Heathen nations** have sinned: cf. Isa 13–23; Jer 46–51; Eze 25–32; Obadiah (against Edom) etc.
- Israel** has sinned: cf. 1Ki 8:34 and Isa 1:4.
- The church** has sinned: cf. Rev 2–3.

d.) There are differences in degree between individual sins

As we have said above: concerning the essence (the character) of sin, there is no difference. Sin is sin. However there are **differences in relation to the gravity** of sin, taking into consideration the

occasion and reason (motive) of the sin in question. The Roman Catholic doctrine differentiates between *venial*¹⁶⁷ *sins* and *mortal sins*. The so-called *venial sins* can be forgiven, but *mortal sins* cannot be forgiven. This differentiation is not biblical. The New Testament teaches, that there is only one sin, that cannot be forgiven, namely, the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is committed by those, who resist the call of the Holy Spirit to accept salvation offered through Jesus Christ (cf. Joh 16:8-9; Heb 3:7-8). The Bible rather differentiates between *conscious* (wilful sins, i.e. *intentional sins*) and *unconscious* (sins not wilfully committed, i.e. *not predetermined sins*, or *unintentional sins*). Thiessen points out that the Old Testament in its demand of differentiated sacrifices confirms different degrees of guilt in individual men.¹⁶⁸ The New Testament also points to this fact: cf. Luk 12:47ff; Joh 19:11; Rom 2:6; Heb 2:2-4; 10:28-31.

Num 15:22 *Now if you unintentionally fail to keep any of these commands...*

Num 15:30 *But anyone who sins defiantly ("sins with a high hand" [i.e. sinning wilfully])...*

This difference also becomes clear if we compare Peter's denial of Jesus and the betrayal of Jesus through Judas. One of the reasons, why there are differences in the degree of guilt, comes from the fact that not all men have the same amount of knowledge (information) of the truth:

Luk 12:47-48 *That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked...*

Mat 12:41-42 *...and now one greater than Jonah is here . . . and now one greater than Solomon is here.*

Paul illustrates this from his own experience:

1Ti 1:13 *...I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.*

We close this chapter in turning our eyes to Christ, crucified for us:

1Pe 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

Heb 9:26 *...But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

Therefore we say with the psalmist: "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say this – those he redeemed from the hand of the foe..." (Psa 107:1-2).

In conclusion to this chapter, here some key Bible-passages concerning the forgiveness of sin:

Lev 16:7-10.20-22; 17:11.

¹⁶⁷ This refers to *sins*, that can be forgiven (from the Latin adjective *venialis*, derived from the substantive *venia* = forgiveness, grace, leniency etc.; i.e. actually forgivable sins).

¹⁶⁸ Henry Clarence Thiessen, op. cit., pp. 193-194.

| | | |
|----|-----|---------------------------------------|
| | Psa | 32:5; 51; 103:3-4.12. |
| | Pro | 28:13. |
| | Isa | 1:18; 38:17; 43:24-25; 44:22; 53:5-6. |
| | Hos | 14:5. |
| 5 | Mic | 7:18-19. |
| | Zec | 3:1-7. |
| | Mat | 26:28. |
| | Joh | 1:29. |
| | Act | 10:43. |
| 10 | Rom | 3:25; 5:20. |
| | 2Co | 5:21. |
| | Eph | 1:7. |
| | Col | 2:13-14. |
| | Heb | 9:22. |
| 15 | 1Pe | 2:24. |
| | 1Jo | 1:7-9; 2:1-2.12. |
| | Rev | 1:5. |

V. CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL AND OF SIN

We recapitulate: From the time of the fall of Satan man stood between two spiritual powers: *God* and *Satan*. Man was a ruler under *the* ruler par excellence. He was a free creature within the will of God. Man was in union with God in a fellowship characterised by love and trust/confidence. As creature he was subordinate to his Creator. Man should have stood the test, i.e. not to break the only law (commandment) God gave him:

Gen 2:17 *...but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...*

10 When he was created and up to his fall, Adam was holy; his character was good; there was no evil or badness in him. He did not need to decide for the good, as long he had not decided for evil. This kind of freedom, namely, the will of God, i.e. either to respect or to overstep a barrier/border, was the necessary corollary of being created in the image of God. Now Eve was tempted and deceived by Satan (2Co 11:3; 1Ti 2:13-14) and Adam followed her in this decision of disobedience.

15 “Modern” man inevitably asks this question: “*Why such severe punishment for such a small (light) sin?*” One must not forget that in this (outward) act of disobedience a (inner) decision of the heart was revealed. This decision is certainly not an insignificant small matter, a mere trifle, man wanting after all – following the serpent – *to become like God*. It concerns a grave offence: *Rebellion, emancipation from God (trial) and usurpation!* Through his *NO* to the will of God, man

20 must by necessity be punished, since God must keep his Word, his promise:

Gen 2:17 *...for when you eat of it you will surely die!*

25 “*God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?*” (Num 23:19).

A. Consequences of sin for Adam

Adam became a sinner and these are the consequences:

1. Separation from God

Gen 3:8 *...and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

Gen 3:24 *...he drove the man out . . . of the Garden of Eden*

30 This separation took place immediately after the fall of man. A holy God cannot and will not live in fellowship with sinners; sin cannot exist in the presence of God. Because God is (*per se*) *life* (cf. Joh 1:4; 5:26; 6:35; 11:25; 14:6; Act 3:15; 1Jo 1:2; 5:20 etc.) and the possibility to have life exists only in him (cf. Act 17:26), a separation from God implies by necessity *loss of life*, i.e. *death*. Where there was fellowship and love, now fear and shame prevail (cf. Gen 3:10; Heb 2:14-15; 1Jo 4:18).

2. Bondage to Satan

Joh 8:34 *I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.*

Rom 6:16 *Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey?*

2Pe 2:19 *...for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.*

Joh 8:44 *You belong to your father, the devil...*

When man gave his consent to sin, listening to the words of Satan, he became the slave of the same. Satan became thereby the legitimate ruler of man! This is also the reason, why Jesus, himself the Son of God, speaks of the devil as the *prince of this world* (cf. Joh 12:31). Paul says the same (Eph 2:2); even calling him “*the god of this world [i.e. this age/aeon]*” (cf. 2Co 4:4).

3. Death

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death...*

Through sin man was changed in his innermost being. Through his fall man became corrupted and with that also... mortal! This is a threefold death:

a.) Spiritual (inner) death

Eph 2:1 *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins...*

1Co 2:14 *The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God...*

This means that man fallen into sin has become spiritually dead. Because of his fallen nature he cannot perceive divine and spiritual matters. Spiritual death occurred immediately, as a consequence of the fall. Spiritual death signifies separation from God, who is (*per se*) life.

b.) Physical (outer) death

1Co 15:22 *For as in Adam all die...*

Rom 8:10 *But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.*

Rom 8:11 *And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.*

The separation of body and soul constitutes death. Death is the logical and inescapable consequence of sin: Gen 3:19; Psa 90:7-11 etc. Sickness and pain are ultimately results from the fall of man. One could actually say: “**Born to die!**” We are born to die! The unbeliever normally clings with all his strength to his earthly physical life. But it is a futile and already lost battle. The believer on the other hand knows that another life is waiting for him. Therefore he should actually not be frightened by physical death: cf. 2Co 5:1ff; Phi 1:21-24; Heb 2:15. He knows, that on the

day of Christ's return, the bodies of the Christians then (currently) alive, will be changed and the bodies of the deceased believers will be raised incorruptible (cf. 1Co 15:50-53; 1Th 4:14-17).¹⁶⁹

c.) The eternal death

It is also called *the second* (Rev 2:11; 20:6.14; cf. Joh 5:24) or the *other death*.

Joh 8:24 *I told you that you would die in your sins...*

Rev 20:14 *The lake of fire is the second death.*

According to the words of Jesus, the unbeliever is already judged (cf. Joh 3:18). Paul says, that unbelieving man is dead by nature (Eph 2:1ff). After his (physical) death, the unbeliever waits in *Hades* (i.e. the realm of death) for his resurrection and judgement before the white throne (cf. Rev 20:11-15). This event will take place after the 1000-year-kingdom of Christ on earth at the threshold to eternity. While saved man will live in fellowship with God from eternity to eternity (cf. Rev 21:1 to 22:5), unbelievers will remain separated from God in eternal pain (cf. Mat 25:41; Rev 14:9-11; 20:14-15). Death is not an end as such, but rather a condition/state. The goal and purpose of human life is to live in fellowship with God, who is life and who alone can give eternal life (cf. Joh 17:3). To be separated from God means death because this is the state of eternal separation from God who alone is true life (cf. 2Th 1:9).

Every human being belongs by nature, since his birth, entirely to the sphere of the natural man. Each man (with exception of the *Son of man*, i.e. Jesus, the Son of God) is automatically by nature in Adam (cf. Rom 5:12ff and 1Co 15:22).

B. Consequences of the fall for mankind

Every human being is by nature in a state/condition of

- separation from God,
- bondage to Satan and
- death.

The consequences of this condition are obvious:

1. To the spirit

The spirit of man has become blind for God and divine matters. He does not understand and hear God anymore:

1Co 2:14 *The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God...*

Eph 4:18 *They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.*

¹⁶⁹ More to that in the subchapter on the resurrection of the believers in our brochure on *Eschatology*.

He does not accept anymore the leading and guiding of his Creator. He has lost his privileged position and he became a slave of his master, namely, Satan. The passage in Rom 1:21ff describes the activity, i.e. the repercussions of this dead spirit of man, who gives himself over to idols, i.e. worshipping the creation rather than the Creator.

5 2. To the soul

Through sin the soul of man lost guidance and orientation, because the dead spirit of man cannot direct the soul properly. It is largely left to the flesh and becomes increasingly depraved in the succession of the generations.

a.) Mind (reason)

10 **2Co 4:3-4** *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.*

15 **Eph 4:18** *...they are darkened in their understanding...*

1Co 1:20-21 ...wisdom of the world is foolishness before God!

20 The mind of man is blinded. Darkened human intelligence is guided by the flesh of man. His thinking moves outside of the will of God and is ultimately opposed to God. In the religious domain, the efforts of human thinking (reasoning of the mind) lead to **philosophy**.

b.) Emotion

Rom 1:26 *Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts...*

25 The emotional life of man has gone totally astray. It is whipped by the lust of the flesh and/or selfishness (egoism) and abandoned to the waves of the sea, like a ship that has lost its steering. The religious efforts of the emotions lead to a false **mysticism**.

c.) Will

30 **2Ti 2:26** *...and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.*

Eph 2:3 *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.*

35 The will of man is always directed towards a goal. Since his fall into sin, man is no more “god-orientated”; his will became a slave of the flesh (cf. Pro 7:6-27). The religious efforts of the will, lead to **legalism** (moralistic attitude).

3. To the conscience

40 **Tit 1:15** *...In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.*

The conscience was darkened by sin. It is filled with sinful and perverted views and it does not react anymore as it should:

Isa 5:20 *Woe to those who call evil good and good evil...*

5 4. To practical life

Since the fall in Eden, sin has penetrated through all generations up to the present:

Rom 5:12 *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.*

Through millenniums mankind has been divided and at variance on the attitude towards Jesus. Since the fall there is enmity between the children of God and the children of the devil:

Gen 3:15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*

Right afterwards, i.e. in Gen 4, we hear of the first example: Cain and Abel.

Another consequence of the sin of man was (and is) the **confusion of languages**:

Gen 11:7 *Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.*

C. The consequences of the fall for nature/creation

Nature was cursed because of the sin of man:

Gen 3:17-18 *...Cursed is the ground because of you...*

Gen 3:14 The serpent is cursed

Gen 3:19 *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground...*

The earth shall no more be blessed to bring forth its fullness of fruit. With much effort and sweat on his brow man now has to work for the sustaining of life.

Only in the 1000-year-kingdom the earth will again bring forth fruit in the fullness of blessing (cf. Isa 35:6-7; 65:21; Amo 9:13).¹⁷⁰ Since the fall and even today nature (the whole of creation) longs for liberation, after its redemption:

Rom 8:19-23 *Creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as*

¹⁷⁰ More to that in the chapter on the *Millennium* in our brochure on *Eschatology*.

in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

D. The consequences of the fall for God

- 5 Man has changed in his being through sin, but God has remained the same. God does not change, he is unchanging: cf. Psa 102:27-28; Mal 3:6; Heb 1:12; 13:8; Jam 1:17. The wrath of God over sin had to be revealed, but this does not mean that it is a new characteristic (attribute) of God. Rather, his wrath is an expression of his holiness which cannot tolerate the presence of sin.
- 10 Christ is the **Creator and Keeper, respectively the Preserver** of all things (cf. Joh 1:1-9; Heb 1:1-3). With the entrance of sin, God is of necessity also the **Judge**. He has given the judgement to Christ, his Son, who is also the Son of man (cf. Joh 5:24-28). God is not only *righteousness*, he is also *love*. He wants all men to be saved (1Ti 2:3-4). Immediately after the fall he has already pointed to a way of salvation (cf. the *proto-gospel* in Gen 3:15). The Creator came into the world to
- 15 redeem his lost creatures. So Christ also became the **Redeemer** and **Saviour** of his creatures. Through grace in Jesus Christ a sinful man can become a new creature: ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”*** (2Co 5:17) The question *“how can man become a new creation?”* is answered in *Soteriology*.

VI. Bibliography

1. Reference books

- Archer, Gleason L. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982.
- Bauer, Walter. *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur*. Reprint of the 5th revised edition. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971.
- Carrez, Maurice et François Morel. *Dictionnaire grec-français du Nouveau Testament*. 4th revised edition. Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1988.
- Gesenius, Wilhelm. *Wilhelm Gesenius' Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*. Reprint of the 17th edition published in 1915, revised by Frants Buhl. Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1962.

2. Biblical Commentaries, diverse books and articles

- Archer, Gleason L. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. 3rd edition. Chicago: Moody Press, 1994.
- Blocher, Henri. *La Doctrine du Péché et de la Rédemption*. Collection Fac Études. 2 volumes. Vaux-sur-Seine, France: Faculté Libre de Théologie Evangélique, 1997.
- Blocher, Henri. *Révélation des origines*. 2nd edition. Lausanne: Presses Bibliques Universitaires, 1988.
- Ham, Ken, Jonathan Sarfati, Carl Wieland and Don Batten (editor). *The Revised and Expanded Answers Book*. Acacia Ridge, Queensland, Australia: Answers in Genesis Ltd., 1990.
- Heppe, Heinrich. *Die Dogmatik der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche*. Revised and edited by Ernst Bizer. Neukirchen, Kreis Moers: Neukirchener Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1958.
- Jaeger, Lydia. *Adam, qui es-tu ? Perspective bibliques et scientifiques sur l'origine de l'humanité*. Charols, France : Éditions Excelsis, 2013.
- Junker, Reinhard and Siegfried Scherer. *Evolution: Ein kritisches Lehrbuch*. 5th revised edition. Giessen, Germany: Weyel Biologie, 2001.
- Kennedy, D. James. *Magouilles & Boulettes Evolutionnistes*. Translated from the English. Vuarrens, Suisse: Centre Biblique Européen, n. d.
- Külling, S. *Der Schöpfungsbericht und naturwissenschaftliche Fragen*. Reutlingen: Chr. Killinger, 1976.
- Morris, Henry M. *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings*. Welwyn, Herts., England: Evangelical Press, 1976.
- Morris, Henry M. *Scientific Creationism*. 2nd edition. El Cajon, CA: Master Books, 1985.
- Nesbitt, Jacques. *Création et évolution, problèmes d'origines*. La Bégude, France: Ed. MEAF, 1976.
- Schaeffer, Francis. *La Genèse, le berceau de l'histoire*. Translated from the American. Geneva: La Maison de la Bible, 1983.
- Schmidtgal, Boris. *Informationen aus der Studiengemeinschaft Wort und Wissen*, Wort und Wissen Info 4/18 Nr. 125. Baiersbronn, Germany: W+W Studiengemeinschaft Wort und Wissen, November 2018.
- Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre. *Aufstieg zur Einheit: Die Zukunft der menschlichen Evolution*. Stuttgart: Deutscher Bücherbund, 1974.

- Thiessen, Henry Clarence. *Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Revised by Vernon D. Doerksen. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979.
- Unger, Merrill F. *Ungers Grosses Bibelhandbuch*. Translated from the American. Asslar: Verlag Schulte + Gerth, 1987.
- White, A. J. Monty. *Quel est l'âge de la terre?* Translated from the American. Lausanne: Centre Biblique Européen, 1986.
- Wieland, Carl. *Stones and Bones: Powerful evidence against evolution*. 3rd printing. Acacia Ridge, Queensland, Australia: Answers in Genesis, 2005.
- Wiskin, Richard. *Die Bibel und das Alter der Erde*. 3rd edition. Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler; Studiengemeinschaft WORT UND WISSEN, 1999.

3. Articles, CD, videos and correspondences

- Amey, Pierre. K7vidéo 1308-1311: TVP Cortaillod.
- Bédard, Paulin. 'Critique de l'Interprétation «cadre» ou «littéraire» de Genèse 1'. La Revue réformée. Sommaire N° 252, 2009/5. Nov. 2009. Tome LX. <https://larevuereformee.net>.
- Berthault, Guy. 'Expériences de sédimentologie'. *Compte-rendu de l'Académie des Sciences*, 306, II No 17 (1988): pp. 717-724.
- Berthault, Guy. 'Les principes de datation géologique en question (une nouvelle approche : la paléohydraulique'. *Fusion* N° 81 (May/June 2000): pp. 32-39.
- Bible Works 5, Revision 2, 2002.
- Devins, Pierre-André. Food engineer; Extracts of his lectures on the subject "Creation or Evolution" by e-mail (September/October 2005).
- Schirmacher, Thomas. 'Auf dem Weg zu einer biblischen Chronologie der Kulturgeschichte' in *Bibel und Gemeinde*, 4/91: pp. 390-427.

Table of contents

| | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| | I. THE ORIGIN OF MAN..... | 4 |
| | A. Different theories or hypotheses concerning the origin of man | 5 |
| | B. The creation account..... | 8 |
| 5 | 1. Creation in 6 days: 24-hour-days or “period-days”? | 9 |
| | a.) Arguments held for the period-days-hypothesis | 9 |
| | b.) Arguments for a creation in six 24-hour-days | 9 |
| | 2. A supernatural creation (<i>supernaturalism</i>)..... | 10 |
| | C. The theory of evolution | 11 |
| | D. The unity of the human race | 18 |
| 10 | E. The vocation of man..... | 19 |
| | 1. Called to fellowship..... | 20 |
| | a.) First - fellowship with God..... | 20 |
| | b.) Second - fellowship with man | 20 |
| | 2. Called to rule | 22 |
| 15 | 3. Called to eternal life | 22 |
| | II. THE NATURE OF MAN | 24 |
| | A. The image of God and conscience | 25 |
| | 1. The significance of the image of God | 26 |
| 20 | a.) The image of God, which man bears, refers to his personality | 26 |
| | b.) The image of God, which man bears, also refers to his conscience or his moral consciousness | 27 |
| | 2. Consequences of the image of God | 29 |
| | a.) God protects human life..... | 29 |
| | b.) The personality of man is indestructible..... | 29 |
| 25 | c.) Man should rule over the creatures below him..... | 29 |
| | d.) Fellowship with God and fellowship among man | 29 |
| | B. The immaterial nature of man | 30 |
| | 1. The relation between spirit and soul..... | 30 |
| | 2. The origin of the soul | 31 |
| 30 | a.) The theory of the pre-existence of the soul..... | 31 |
| | b.) The theory of a direct creation of the soul (<i>creatianism</i>)..... | 32 |
| | c.) Traducianism | 32 |
| | 3. The spirit | 33 |
| | 4. The soul..... | 34 |
| 35 | a.) Soul means life | 34 |
| | b.) The soul is the seat of the personality | 34 |
| | c.) The soul is the subject of sin and the object of salvation | 34 |
| | 5. The heart..... | 35 |
| | a.) The heart is the centre, the core | 35 |
| 40 | b.) The heart represents the innermost being of man | 35 |
| | c.) The heart is the origin, the source of the life of the soul..... | 35 |
| | d.) The heart is the centre of the religious life | 37 |
| | C. The physical/material nature of man..... | 38 |
| | 1. The body of man..... | 38 |
| 45 | a.) The natural body | 38 |
| | b.) The body of the born again man | 39 |
| | 2. The flesh | 41 |
| | a.) The flesh is in its first instance the material basis for the outer nature of man | 41 |
| | b.) The flesh is the seat of human weakness | 41 |
| | c.) Flesh is referring to the whole of the fallen body | 41 |

| | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| | D. The unity of the human personality..... | 42 |
| | 1. The unity of body and soul..... | 43 |
| | a.) Through the body the soul is able to receive (import)..... | 43 |
| 5 | b.) Through the body the soul can express itself (export)..... | 43 |
| | c.) Mutual relationship between soul and body..... | 44 |
| | (1) The influence of the body upon the soul..... | 44 |
| | (2) Influence of the soul upon the body..... | 44 |
| | 2. Soul and spirit..... | 46 |
| 10 | a.) Influence of the soul upon the spirit..... | 46 |
| | b.) The influence of the spirit upon the soul..... | 46 |
| | III. THE FALL OF MAN..... | 48 |
| | A. The law of God..... | 48 |
| | 1. The meaning of the law of God..... | 48 |
| 15 | 2. The purpose of the law of God..... | 49 |
| | 3. The relation of the believer to the law of God..... | 50 |
| | B. The fall and the problems connected with it..... | 51 |
| | 1. Where does evil come from?..... | 51 |
| | 2. How could Adam, a holy creature, fall?..... | 56 |
| 20 | a.) Adam could have not sinned..... | 56 |
| | b.) His sin was a free act of the will towards disobedience..... | 57 |
| | 3. Why did Satan sin?..... | 57 |
| | 4. Why did God cast Satan upon the earth?..... | 59 |
| | 5. Why did God allow the temptation of man?..... | 60 |
| | C. Temptation..... | 61 |
| 25 | 1. The historicity of the account of the fall in Gen 3..... | 61 |
| | 2. What is <i>temptation</i> ?..... | 61 |
| | 3. Temptation and the tactics of the devil..... | 62 |
| | a.) Doubting the Word of God..... | 63 |
| 30 | b.) A <i>no</i> to God's Word..... | 63 |
| | c.) A word of Satan..... | 63 |
| | IV. SIN..... | 66 |
| | A. The fact of sin..... | 66 |
| | 1. God establishes sin as a fact..... | 66 |
| 35 | 2. The Word of God reveals the existence of sin..... | 66 |
| | 3. Sin becomes evident through the law..... | 67 |
| | 4. The believer knows about his sin..... | 67 |
| | 5. Nature testifies to the fact of sin..... | 67 |
| | B. Sin (original/hereditary sin)..... | 68 |
| 40 | 1. Definition..... | 68 |
| | 2. The essence (character) of sin..... | 68 |
| | a.) Anarchy..... | 68 |
| | b.) Rebellion (insurrection) against God..... | 69 |
| | c.) Sin is egocentricity (selfishness)..... | 69 |
| 45 | 3. The total depravity of the human nature..... | 70 |
| | 4. The seat of sin..... | 71 |
| | 5. The activation of sin..... | 72 |
| | a.) The law..... | 72 |
| | b.) Temptation..... | 73 |
| 50 | 6. Imputation of (hereditary) sin..... | 73 |
| | a.) The Pelagian theory..... | 73 |
| | b.) Semipelagianism..... | 74 |
| | c.) The theory of indirect imputation..... | 74 |
| | d.) The realistic theory..... | 74 |
| 55 | e.) The theory of substitution (representation)..... | 75 |
| | f.) The corporate theory..... | 75 |

| | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| | g.) Evaluation of these theories | 75 |
| | h.) Excursus: <i>Predestination</i> or <i>free will</i> | 76 |
| | (1) Supralapsarianism | 76 |
| 5 | (2) Infralapsarianism | 77 |
| | (3) Amyraldism | 77 |
| | (4) Election is based on the foreknowledge of God..... | 77 |
| | (5) Arminianism | 78 |
| | (6) Semipelagianism | 78 |
| | (7) Pelagianism | 78 |
| 10 | C. Sins | 82 |
| | 1. Scripture uses different expressions for sin | 82 |
| | a.) Sin, missing the goal (Gen 4:7) | 82 |
| | b.) Transgression, sin, iniquity, guilt, punishment (Gen 4:13)..... | 82 |
| 15 | c.) Evil, malice (Gen 6:5)..... | 83 |
| | d.) Sin, the mistake..... | 83 |
| | e.) Unrighteousness..... | 83 |
| | f.) Lawlessness | 83 |
| | g.) Unbelief or unfaithfulness | 84 |
| 20 | 2. Differences between individual sins | 85 |
| | a.) There are different kinds of sins | 85 |
| | b.) Sins are committed against different “objects” | 85 |
| | c.) Sins may be committed by different types of persons | 86 |
| | d.) There are differences in degree between individual sins | 86 |
| | V. CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL AND OF SIN | 89 |
| 25 | A. Consequences of sin for Adam | 89 |
| | 1. Separation from God | 89 |
| | 2. Bondage to Satan..... | 90 |
| | 3. Death | 90 |
| 30 | a.) Spiritual (inner) death..... | 90 |
| | b.) Physical (outer) death | 90 |
| | c.) The eternal death | 91 |
| | B. Consequences of the fall for mankind | 91 |
| | 1. To the spirit | 91 |
| 35 | 2. To the soul | 92 |
| | a.) Mind (reason) | 92 |
| | b.) Emotion | 92 |
| | c.) Will | 92 |
| | 3. To the conscience | 92 |
| | 4. To practical life | 93 |
| 40 | C. The consequences of the fall for nature/creation..... | 93 |
| | D. The consequences of the fall for God..... | 94 |
| | VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY..... | 95 |

My special thanks are due to Heinz Lettner for translating this brochure from German into English and to Louise Rathgeb for her proof-reading; to Daniel Soller for his assistance in questions linked with the word processing program, to engineer Pierre-André Devins for his precious advice on the “creation versus evolution controversy” as well as to Heinz Weber, my former teacher, on whose notes some chapters of this brochure are built up.

Kreuzlingen, May 2022

Copyright © Roland Kleger, Doctor of Theology, CH-8280 Kreuzlingen (Switzerland)