

Series: God & Abraham #1295

Title: *Genesis 15.6, Romans 5.12*
Adam, Our Representative

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. We have been talking about the imputation of Adam's sin to all who follow Adam. The imputation or the crediting of Adam's sin to our account is crucial to understand and I have fit in this discussion here at Genesis chapter 15 and verse 6 to prove to you that Abram was indeed a sinner. We know he was a sinner because we read about his sin. And we know he was an unrighteous man because he had, imputed to him, Adam's sin. This is why Genesis 15, verse 6 says God made Abram righteous. The Lord turned him from an *unrighteous* man to a *righteous* man.

And we have been following the Apostle Paul's argument in Romans 5, verse 12 that all sinned in Adam and all are guilty of sin before holy God on account of Adam's one sin. When Adam sinned, we all sinned. We may find this difficult to accept, but that does not mean this is not true. And we will talk again about this as we move forward. But yesterday I gave you the first way to make sense, biblically, for *how* imputation works.

We said that Adam is the father of humankind. He is the first man and he represents all men and all women. So when Adam sinned, the whole of humanity sinned. And we looked at very unique and intriguing passages in Genesis 14 and Hebrews 7, especially Hebrews chapter 7 and a couple of verses there that dealt with Levi tithing as a part of Abraham's tithe, even though Levi lived a long time after Abraham. Levi tithed in the loins of his great-grandfather Abraham, you might remember.

Even though Levi came much later than Abraham, so Levi did not actually, actively, voluntarily, or consciously pay the tithe, but because Levi was in the loins of Abraham, Abraham virtually paid tithes for himself and his progeny, at the same time.

And, in the same manner, this is how the guilt of Adam's sin gets imputed to all of us. You and I are in the loins of Adam. And so when Adam sinned, we sinned. That is *how* imputation of sin works. Today I want to introduce you to a second way in which to think of Adam's sin being imputed to us and that is that Adam is our representative. Yesterday we learned that Adam is the father of humankind and today we will learn that Adam is our representative. Sometimes he is called our "federal head," and I will talk about what that means.

By the way, if you missed the last broadcast, you can get it as a free podcast from godisministry.org, on the internet just visit my website, godisministry.o-r-g and get all caught up! You will be glad you did, because everything that is said really needs to be taken together to be understood.

As we move into our content for today, let me just remind you what Romans 5, verse 12 says, **"¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned..."** Note the emphasis there: "all sinned." That tells us that everyone sins. Everyone is a sinner. And we are sinners by nature. We are born sinners, because we have the sin of Adam credited to us.

Well, how is it that when Adam sinned, we all sinned? Think of Adam as our representative. There are a few analogies we can use here. For those of you listening in the United States, we have what is called a Congress. It meets in Washington, DC and it is made up of both senators and representatives. The idea, brilliant on the part of America's founding fathers, is that each senator in the Senate and each representative in the House of Representatives votes on matters of concern to the American people. And, rather than each individual citizen voting, we elect our senators and representatives to *represent* us; to vote on our behalf.

I am fully aware, believe me, I am fully aware of how this process has been corrupted and how likely it is that your representatives in the congress do *not* represent you well. But, let's not get into politics here. Let's keep this at the level of an analogy. So, here sits Amy the American and she goes to her local school each November and she punches a whole in the ballot next to the woman she wants to represent her in the Congress. That candidate wins and goes to Washington and votes on certain legislation. She represents Amy.

Likewise, Adam represents each one of us. His vote was to sin against God. He voted on our behalf and guess what, he did exactly what we would have done. Now, I will likely get resistance on this statement. But I believe it to be true. If I were Adam, I would have done exactly what he did. If you were in Adam's bare feet back there in the Garden in Eden, you would have done what he did. Only we may have done it quicker than he did. If we think we would have obeyed God whereas Adam and Eve disobeyed, then we do not understand just how sinful we are.

This is why earlier I mentioned that another name for representative is federal head. Theologians talk about Adam being the federal head of the human race. Just as the legislature is a part of the federal government in Washington, so too Adam is our federal head in Eden.

Another analogy is that of an ambassador. All of you tuning in, from around the world, can relate to this. Your country has an ambassador who is sent out on behalf of you. He represents you to the world. So when a group of the world's diplomats are gathered together and your ambassador makes a statement, he or she is doing that on behalf of you (whether you like it or not, whether you agree with it or not). Likewise, think of Adam is our ambassador. He represented us in the Garden at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When his wife Eve handed him the forbidden fruit, he ate. He is our representative, our federal head.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, the greatest preacher in the English language of the last century (in my opinion) said this in one of his sermons on Romans 5, verse 12 (quote), "[This] was an action taken by God Himself. He made Adam, and having made him, [God] said to him in effect, 'Adam, I regard you as not only the first of a series, not merely the head in a natural sense of all who are going to come out of you, I constitute you the representative head, the federal head of all humanity; I am going to make a covenant with you, and I am going to deal with you as the representative of the entire human race of which you will be the progenitor..."

I intend to make a covenant with you to this effect, that every benefit you enjoy will pass to your progeny; and also any punishment that may come to you will likewise pass upon your progeny. When you act you will not simply be acting for yourself, I am constituting you the federal head and representative of the human race and therefore what you do will involve all of them.' (*Romans Chapter 5, 216-217*)." (End quote.)

I like the way Dr. Lloyd-Jones puts it. I find that helpful. I hope you do as well. This is the key part of his words, "...every benefit you enjoy will pass to your progeny; and also any punishment that may come to you will likewise pass upon your progeny. When you act you will not simply be acting for yourself." Progeny are descendants. The punishment that Adam received (death) is now our punishment. Just as the benefits Adam enjoyed, we also enjoy, so too the punishment, because we are the progeny of Adam.

We have the analogy of a representative in the federal government and we have the analogy of an ambassador, and let me give you one more so you can grasp what we are talking about. Many of you will like this analogy, and I do too, because we are sports fans! Specifically we are fans of American football. The rest of the world knows football as what we call soccer, but I am speaking of the men who play on my favorite team the New England Patriots. (And no snarky Bill Belichick comments either, please.)

When one player jumps offsides, the whole team gets penalized. There are eleven offensive players on the field at one time and when just one of them jumps before the ball is snapped, all eleven move back five yards. I hate to watch my team commit penalties, don't you?

In a much more serious, yet like manner, when Adam jumped offsides we all got penalized. When Adam broke God's rule, we all broke God's rule. This the imputation of Adam's sin, his sin credited to our accounts.

Now we have two ways to understand how imputation works. We said that Adam is the father of humankind and we have said that Adam is the representative or federal head of all humanity. God made it this way. This is an act of God. God is who God is and this is how God has decided it will be.

We can object. Maybe you are objecting. But, if you feel this way, hold onto your objections. There is another side to this that we will be looking at and this other side to the same coin of imputation will counter your objections. That being said, we are out of time for this week. Please digest what has been said over the last few days, listen to this again on the podcast, and then be sure and be here on Monday as we continue to discover who God Is.

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