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Ezekiel 18

The Context

Ezekiel 18:2-4:

What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, YE SHALL NOT HAVE OCCASION ANY MORE TO USE THIS PROVERB in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, IT SHALL DIE.

vs.5-13 If a righteous man begets a wicked son, the wicked son will die (spiritually, v.26), even though his father was righteous.

vs.14-18 If that wicked son begets a righteous son, then the righteous son will live, even though his father was wicked.

God says that the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" is NOT true from a spiritual viewpoint. My opponent says just the opposite. Who do you believe?

Ezekiel 18:20

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

This verse answers the question of this debate:

Does the son bear the iniquity of the father?

The following is GOD's answer to that question:

v.19 When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, ... he shall surely live
v.20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die
v.20 son shall not bear the iniquity of the father
v.20 the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him

And so I don't inherit the sin of my biological father (nor the sin of Adam), and neither did Seth inherit the sin of Adam.

God says that "The soul that sinneth, IT shall die. The son shall NOT bear the iniquity of the father." My opponent says just the opposite.

Deuteronomy 32:5

Deuteronomy 32:4-5:

He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

THEY HAVE CORRUPTED THEMSELVES, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

Three points:

"corrupted" implies CLEAN beforehand

They corrupted THEMSELVES - Adam did not do it

The corruption occurred in their lifetime, not sometime before

My opponent thinks that Adam corrupts people. But this passage teaches my position; that people corrupt THEMSELVES.

II Samuel 12:23

How Did David Know He Would See His Son Again?

II Samuel 12:23:

But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I SHALL GO TO HIM, but he shall not return to me.

First of all, if David's baby inherited sin, consistency would demand that he went to everlasting punishment (Rom 6:23).

No matter how my opponent keeps David's infant son out of the bad place, I still want to know, how could David know that his son was going to heaven? How could David know that his son was of the elect?

Since it's impossible to tell if an infant is of my opponent's "elect," the only alternative is that David knew his son DID NOT INHERIT SIN, and did not have any personal sin, and so he went to heaven on that basis.

God Hath Made Man Upright

Eccl 7:29: ... God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

The Bible says God makes man UPRIGHT. This is the very opposite of my opponent's position, that man is born with original sin.

How do I know Eccl7:29 is saying God makes each man upright, and not just that Adam was created upright in the original creation?:

Because the second part of the verse tells why man is not still upright. It is because "THEY (plural, not just Adam) have sought out MANY (plural, not just Adam's one sin) inventions."

The second part of the verse implies that if a man did not seek out (sinful, verse 20) "schemes" (NKJV), he would be upright. This contradicts my opponent's position, that a man would not be upright, even if he never committed sin, due to his inherited sin.

God makes man upright = answer to debate.

Born Astray Or Gone Astray?

- Is 53:6 – All we like sheep have gone astray ...
- Rom 3:12 – They are all gone out of the way ...
- Gen 6:12 – And God looked upon the earth & it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.
- Deut 32:5 – They have corrupted themselves ...
- II Pet 2:15 have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray

“Gone astray” and “corrupted themselves” means we didn’t start out astray and corrupt, right? and that the fault for corruption lies squarely on our own shoulders, right?

Jeremiah 19:4

Children Called “Innocents”

Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, ... and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;

This contradicts my opponent's position that children are not really “innocent,” because they are born with original sin.

Romans 9:11

Romans 9:11:

For the children (speaking of Jacob and Esau) being not yet born, NEITHER HAVING DONE ANY GOOD OR EVIL, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth

This verse proves that children, before they are born, have done nothing good or evil; that there is nothing that they could be judged upon, good or bad. This contradicts my opponent's position, because he teaches that there is something a baby could be judged negatively on: inherited sin.

This verse teaches that there is nothing bad that a baby could be judged on ("neither having done any good or evil"). My opponent says there is something that a baby could be judged negatively on (inherited sin). Who do you believe?

II Corinthians 5:10

II Corinthians 5:10:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things DONE IN HIS BODY, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Three key words:

DONE - we will be judged by things that we DO, not by something that we inherit, as my opponent says.

HIS - we will be judged by things that WE do, not by something Adam did, as my opponent says.

BODY - we will be judged by things that we do WHILE IN OUR BODY, not by things done after we are in our body (as the Mormons teach), or things done before we are in our body, as my opponent teaches.

Supposed inherited sin would not be something that a person did IN HIS BODY would it? If there were such a thing as inherited sin (which there is not), this verse would PROVE that we would not be judged by it.

God says that a person will be judged by the things DONE IN HIS BODY. My opponent says that we will also be judged by things done by someone else before we even had a body. Who do you believe?

Did Jesus Inherit Sin?

The consequences of the inherited sin/depravity theory would be that Jesus inherited sin/depravity, because He was a man. But contrary to that, Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus was "without sin."

Notice that Jesus:

- had same flesh and blood as us - Heb 2:14a: "... as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he (Jesus) also himself likewise took part of the same"
- was made like us - Heb 2:17a: "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren"
- "tempted like as we are" – Heb 4:15
Which means that if we can't help but to sin, then neither could Jesus, else we are not tempted like He was.

Jesus did not inherit sin or depravity, and since we are like him, then neither do we !

James 1:14-15

James 1:14-15:

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

This passage tells us what spiritual death results from. Here is the sequence of events:

1. drawn away of his own lust (desire)
2. enticed (tempted)
3. lust conceives (the yielding)
4. sin
5. death

This passage proves that a baby is not born spiritually dead (as my opponent teaches), because spiritual death results from lust, temptation, yielding to the temptation, and finally sin ("transgression of the law" - I Jn 3:4), things that a baby CANNOT do.

Contrary to James 1:14-15, my opponent teaches that babies can be spiritually dead without ever having desire, without ever being tempted, without ever yielding to the temptation, without ever sinning.

The Definition Of SIN

Vines:

- "a MISSING of the mark"
- "a sinful DEED, an ACT of sin"

Thayer:

- "to MISS the mark"
- "to DO or GO wrong"
- "VIOLATE God's law"
- "evil DEED"
- "a bad ACTION"
- "that which is DONE wrong"

God:

- "sin is the TRANSGRESSION of the law" - I Jn 3:4
- "to him that knoweth to do good, and DOETH IT NOT, to him it is sin" - James 4:17

Sin is not something that can be inherited; it is something that you DO. It is a missing of the mark, a deed, an act, something you do, it is going wrong, a violation, an action, a transgression, leaving off something that should be done.

Sin is not a trait that can be inherited like blond hair. It is an ACTION that we DO. It makes about as much sense to say that we inherit "jogging" as it does to say that we inherit sin.

God's basic definition of sin ("the transgression of the law") RULES OUT this idea of inheriting sin.

Sin Is Something That You DO, Not Something That You Inherit

Mt 13:41	"and them which DO iniquity"
Jn 3:20	"For every one that DOETH evil"
Rom 2:9	"upon every soul that DOETH evil"
Col 3:25	"But he that DOETH wrong"
III Jn v.11	"but he that DOETH evil"
I Pet 3:12	"the Lord is against them that DO evil"
I Pet 2:22	"Who (Jesus) DID no sin"
Prov 2:14	"Who rejoice to DO evil"
Rom13:4	"But if thou DO that which is evil"

Likewise, righteousness is something that you DO:

"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that DOETH righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." - I Jn 3:7

Now let my opponent find one passage that teaches that the guilt of sin can be transferred.

Judged According To Our Works

Rev 22:12 "to give every man according as his work shall be"

Rev 20:13-14 "and they were judged every man according to their works"

Mt 16:27 "and then he shall reward every man according to his works"

II Tim 4:14 "the Lord reward him according to his works"

I Pet 1:17 "the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work"

Judged According To:

- Our WORKS - not something we inherit as my opponent is teaching.
- OUR Works - not Adam's work as my opponent is teaching.

My opponent really believes that we will be judged based upon NOTHING!

Whose Sins?

WHOSE sins cause our spiritual death, and our need of forgiveness, Adam's or ours?:

Isaiah 59:2 - "But YOUR iniquities have separated between you and you God, and YOUR sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

John 8:24 - "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in YOUR sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in YOUR sins."

Acts 3:19 - "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that YOUR sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord"

These verses prove that our OWN sins cause our spiritual death, that our OWN sins need forgiving. The Bible never teaches that somebody else's sins will cause our spiritual death; or that we need to be forgiven of somebody else's sins.

Whose sins will we be held responsible for? Adam's? Not according to God's word!

God Commands Us Not To Sin

Exodus 20:20 - And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

Psalms 4:4 - Stand in awe, & sin not: commune with your own heart ..., and be still ...

I Corinthians 15:34 - Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God ...

I John 2:1 - My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

Why would God command us not to sin if my opponent's position is correct that we are born so totally depraved that we can't help from sinning almost continuously ?

Man Has The Ability To Choose

- And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, CHOOSE you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. - Joshua 24:15
- I have CHOSEN the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me. - Ps 119:30
- And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they WOULD NOT come. - Mt 22:3

My opponent's position is that the inherited depravity of man is such that he has no ability to choose to do right. But these scriptures indicate otherwise!

Man Wills

Man Wills Either To Serve God:

- If any man WILL do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. - Jn 7:17
- And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And WHOSOEVER WILL, let him take the water of life freely. - Rev 22:17

Or Not To Serve God:

- And ye WILL not come to me, that ye might have life. - Jn 5:40

My opponent's position is that the inherited depravity of man is such that he has no ability to choose (will) to do right. But these scriptures indicate otherwise!

The Word Of God Is God's Power To Save

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation ...

Ps 119:50b thy word hath quickened (made alive) me

I Peter 1:23 Being born again ... by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

James 1:21 receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Eph 6:17b and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

Rom 10:17 Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God

Jn 8:32 ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free (from sin)

Jn 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth

James 1:18 Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth

II Thess 2:14 Whereunto He called you by our gospel

Ps 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul

Men are made upright by God (Eccl 7:29), then go astray (Is 53:6) & corrupt themselves (Deut 32:5), but God uses His word to draw us back (Jn 6:44-45).

Job 21:7-8

"Non-Elect Do Not Die In Infancy"

(Hardshell Baptist - May, 1991)

Job 21:7-8:

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

I asked my opponent, "how could David know his Son would go to heaven?" (II Sam 12:23). He replied, "the non-elect do not die in infancy" (Job 21:7-8).

This passage is not teaching the "non-elect" don't die in infancy; if it were, it would also teach:

- v.7 Not only that they progress past infancy, but that they all become "old."
- v.7 All the non-elect "are mighty in power."
- v.8 All the non-elect have children, and all live long enough to see their children established.
- v.9 The non-elect's homes are never vandalized, attacked, etc.
- v.9 God never punishes any of the non-elect in this life.
- v.10 All of the non-elect's cows have a calf every year.
- v.13 All of the non-elect are wealthy.

Job's friends had argued incorrectly that a person's fortunes in life were a direct measure of his character (20:5,10,16,18,21,23,28-29). Therefore, Job's misfortunes must be blamed upon his wickedness. Job's reply is not that the wicked always (without exception) live to grow old and wealthy, but that you cannot necessarily judge a person's character by how he does in this life.

Since Job is correct (God "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" - Mt 5:45), that the death of an infant (or an adult for that matter) is not necessarily an indication of his goodness or badness, I still want to know:

How could David know his Son would go to heaven?

Jeremiah 31:29-30

If Eze18:3,20 Talking About Spiritual Death,
Then At One Time You Had Inherited Sin

Both passages are only talking about what people would SAY, not what was actually true.

If it were ever true that someone would die for another's sin, then:

- Ezekiel 18:3,20 would teach that it would stop at the time that book was written.
- Jeremiah 31:29ff would teach it would stop when the NT came into effect.

That would be a contradiction

According to Ezek 18:20,
spiritual guilt doesn't transfer.

Ecclesiastes 7:29

God Makes Man Upright At Baptism?

Opponent's order – sin, then God makes upright
Eccl 7:29's order – God makes upright, then sin

Same Hebrew word for “made” is in:

- Gen 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good ...
- Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.
- Gen 3:1 the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which ... God had made ...
- Gen 5:1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him
- Gen 6:6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.
- Gen 9:6 ... in the image of God made he man.

Eccl 7:29 is obviously talking about how God CREATED man. He created man upright.

Inventions Like Light Bulbs?

So this verse is saying that God made man upright, but man invented non-sinful things? That changes v.29's whole point that man lost his uprightness because of something he did.

Notice these types of inventions:

- Ps 99:8 ... thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.
- Ps 106:29 Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.
- Ps 106:39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went prostituting with their own inventions.
- Rom 1:30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, ... inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents.

“inventions” (#2810) in Eccl 7:29 is the feminine plural noun form of the verb #2803, which is used in the following verses:

Gen 50:20 ye thought evil against me

Ps 35:20 but they devise deceitful matters

Prov 24:8 The that deviseth to do evil

Mic 2:1 Woe to them that devise iniquity

Eccl 7:29 is talking about sinful (verse 20)

“schemes,” (NKJV) NOT light bulbs !

"Jesus Was Virgin Born, Thus Exempting Him From Corruption" (Hardshell Baptist - April, 1991)

How does this exempt him, unless Mary was not born totally depraved? I ask my opponent, was she (totally depraved), or wasn't she?

The same issue of the "Hardshell Baptist" uses Job 14:4 ("Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.") to prove total depravity. Job 14:1 says "man that is born of a woman" is under consideration in verse 4. If my opponent's reasoning is correct on verse 4, then verse 1 teaches that the unclean parent that we inherit total depravity from is the mother. Jesus was born "of a woman" (Gal 4:4); I ask HOW WAS HE THEN CLEAN?

The truth is, the fact that Jesus was not totally depraved proves two things:

1. My opponent's understanding of Job 14:4 is incorrect.
2. All men are born innocent, just like Jesus.

The example of Jesus verifies Ecclesiastes 7:29:

"... God hath made man upright, but they (everybody except Jesus) have sought out many inventions."

What Is The Issue?

The issue is not "are sinners depraved?"

depraved - "corrupt, wicked, or perverted" (The Random House College Dictionary)

Sinners are "corrupt, wicked, or perverted." That's what being a sinner means!

I suppose everybody here would agree that homosexuals are corrupt, wicked, and perverted.

Would my opponent agree with the liberals that homosexuals are born that way; that God made them that way?

The issue is:

Are men born corrupt, wicked, or perverted (that is, is it "hereditary"), or do they CHOOSE to be corrupt, wicked, or perverted, instead of choosing God's way?

Exodus 20:5

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, VISITING the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the 3rd&4th generation of them that hate me

This is not saying that children suffer spiritual death because of the sins of their Fathers (that would contradict Ezek 18:20), but it is saying that God sometimes punishes the one who sins by causing his descendants to suffer physical consequences because of the ancestor's sin.

For example, somebody could sure punish me by torturing or killing one of my children:

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- II Sam 12:14,18 - David's son died physically because of David's sin with Bathsheba, and against Uriah. Did David's son also die spiritually because of his Father's sin? No, David said he would see him again (verse 23).
 - I Sam 28:18-19, 31:6 - Saul's three sons (including Jonathon - 31:2) died physically because of Saul's sin.
 - II Sam 21:1,5-6 after Saul's death, famine, and seven descendants of Saul killed because Saul slew the Gibeonites
 - II Chron 33, II Kings 24:3-4 after Manasseh's death, God brings nations against Judah because of Manasseh's sin

Job 14:4

Who Can Bring A Clean Thing Out Of An Unclean? Not One.

Can't use uninspired Job to prove a doctrine:

Job 38:1-2 - ... the Lord answered Job ... and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Jesus/Mary was "born of a woman" (Job 14:1, Gal 4:4). Did Jesus/Mary have original sin?

The context is not sin, but a troubled life (v.1) and mortality (vs.1-2,5). If this were talking about sin, then it would just be saying that men do sin (I Jn 1:8,10) just like their parents. It doesn't teach the transfer of the guilt of sin.

My opponent doesn't really think this verse is talking about inherited sin, because he doesn't believe a clean thing can come from a clean thing (a converted, forgiven mother).

Nothing to contradict Eccl 7:29 here.

Job 25:4

Job 25:4:

"How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?"

- Let's just ask my opponent "how can Jesus be clean that is born of a woman?"
- Job 25:4 is a statement of Bildad, a "forger of lies" - Job 13:4
- Part "a" of the same verse asks "how then can man be justified with God?" -> either:

1. Bildad was asking how can a man be justified with God, leaving off the answer ("JUSTIFIED by faith" - Rom 5:1), or
2. If he was stating that man cannot be justified before God, he was just wrong about it

Likewise then, in part "b" of the verse -> either:

1. Bildad was asking how can a man be clean that is born of a woman, leaving off the answer (the blood of Christ "CLEANseth us from all sin" - I Jn 1:7), or
2. If he was stating that man cannot be clean that is born of a woman, he was just wrong about it

We should not make Job 25:4 contradict Ez 18:20:

THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, IT SHALL DIE. The son shall NOT bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Psalms 14:1-3

Universal Effect, Therefore Universal Cause?

Psalms 14:1-3:

The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God*. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is none that doeth good*. ... They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is none that doeth good*, no, not one.

My Opponent's Argument:

"Notice it says first they are 'all' gone aside. Where there is an universal effect there must have been an universal cause." (Hardshell Baptist, April, 1991)

- But there is NOT a universal effect - Heb 4:15:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. **JESUS**

- If there is a "universal" cause, it is Satan who tempts us. But my opponent (and my brethren) need to learn that Satan does not make us sin, we ARE ABLE to "resist the devil" (James 4:7).

- The example of Jesus proves this - Heb 4:15.
- God ALWAYS provides "a way to escape" (I Cor 10:13).

Notice the words in vs.1-3 that indicate that those under consideration are wicked, not because they are born that way, but because they COMMIT sin:

DONE abominable works, none that DOETH good, GONE aside, BECOME filthy, none that DOETH good

This passage does not teach inherited sin; instead it teaches all have sinned, just like I Jn 1:8,10:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ... If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Psalms 14:3

TOGETHER Become Filthy

Psalms 14:3:

They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

My Opponent's Argument:

"Notice also that this text says, 'they are all together' become filthy. It does not say that they become sinful 'one at a time' but 'all together.' This means they all sinned 'in Adam.'" (Hardshell Baptist, April, 1991)

The primary meaning for "together" would be ... "taken or considered collectively or conjointly" (Random House College Dictionary); many times it implies "at the same time," but sometimes it does not.

- Same Hebrew word in Job 21:26:

They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

Does this prove that all die "at the same time"?

- Thayer defines the Greek word in Rom 3:12 (which is a quote of Psalms 14:3) as "all to a man, every one."

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If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ... If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Psalms 51:5

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

"shapen in iniquity"

- Does "born in a tongue" (Acts 2:8) mean that the audience was born speaking, or that they were born into an environment that taught them that tongue?
- "John was born in a potato patch" – is John a potato?

"in sin did my mother conceive me"

Does "in anger did my brother hit me" indicate that I was angry, or that my brother was angry? The verse says the mother was "in sin," not David !

I think David is using a hyperbole ("obvious & intentional exaggeration") here. In discussing the magnitude of his sinful state, he exaggerates the point by saying that even his mother was in sin when he was conceived.

The use of a hyperbole is frequent in the Bible - examples:

- Psalms 22:9b - ... thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.
- Job 31:18b - ... and I have guided her (the widow) from my mother's womb

Psalms 51:5 does not contradict Ezekiel 18:20:

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall NOT bear the iniquity of the father ... the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Psalms 58:3

Psalms 58:3:

The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

- David is using a hyperbole ("obvious and intentional exaggeration") here to emphasize how quickly men depart into sin.
- Notice the use of a hyperbole in Psalms 22:9b:

... thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.

- Notice the use of a hyperbole in Job 31:18b:

... and I have guided her (the widow) from my mother's womb

- Psalms 58:3 is certainly not literally talking about infants, as it says that the wicked "GO ASTRAY" (not born astray), "SPEAKING LIES" (a baby cannot even speak). How do the wicked go astray? The text says by "SPEAKING LIES." When do they speak lies? The Hardshell Baptist (April, 1991) says "Just as soon as they are capable of it they speak lies, etc." That is exactly what I teach!

Question for my opponent:

If men are born totally depraved, which way do they go when they GO astray?

The phrase ("GO astray") proves that babies are NOT born astray.

Ecclesiastes 7:29 says "that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions," that is, they "go astray" (Ps 58:3-4).

Psalm 58:4

Serpent Is Poisonous By BIRTH

Psalm 58:4:

Their (the wicked's) poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;

My Opponent's Argument:

The wicked's poison (sin) is like the poison of a serpent. Since the serpent is born with his poison, then the wicked must also be born with his poison (sin).

This is silly, they are obviously not alike in EVERY way:

- Are both liquid?
- Are both the same color?
- Both PHYSICALLY deadly, sometimes quickly?
- Must both bite with the mouth to infect?
- Are both born with their poison?????

Most probably, they are alike only in that both poisons are destructive.

Verse 3 says that they "GO ASTRAY" (not BORN ASTRAY). How do they go astray? The text says by "SPEAKING LIES" (which a baby cannot do). When do they speak lies? The Hardshell Baptist (April, 1991) says "Just as soon as they are capable of it they speak lies, etc." That is exactly what I teach!

Ecclesiastes 7:29 says "that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions," that is, they "go astray" (Psalm 58:3-4).

Jeremiah 17:9

Jeremiah 17:9:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

We agree the heart of the sinner is desperately wicked. The question is, is this verse saying that a person is BORN with this type of heart?:

Eccl 7:29 God hath made man UPRIGHT

Jer17:5 Whose heart DEPARTETH from the Lord

Secondly, who controls the human heart?:

Ezek 18:31 Cast away ... all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and MAKE you a new heart and a new spirit ...

Jer 4:14 WASH thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved

Prov 4:23 KEEP thy heart with all diligence

Jeremiah 17:9 says nothing about being born with a deceitful, desperately wicked heart; it is talking about a man who once had a good heart, but who did not KEEP it, one who DEPARTED from the Lord.

John 6:44

John 6:44:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

- But notice that vs. 45 and 47 tell how God draws a sinner:

It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all TAUGHT of God. Every man therefore that hath HEARD, and hath LEARNED of the Father, cometh unto me ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that BELIEVETH on me hath everlasting life.

- So this passage does not teach that a sinner cannot act. It actually teaches just the opposite, that a sinner must be taught (hear) the gospel, learn it, and believe it!

Yes, the Father does draw sinners, through his word!

-> Rom 10:17:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 8:43, II Tim 3:7, II Pet 2:14, etc.

Sinner Cannot, Never Able

“Cannot” / “never able” (#1410) here does NOT mean “impossible,” but instead has the idea of being precluded from doing something because of another circumstance. Notice similar examples of Strong’s #1410:

Luke 14:20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I CANNOT come.

Mk 2:19 Jesus said ..., Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they CANNOT fast.

Lk 8:13 either teaches that a Christian can fall from grace, or that person that will ultimately be lost CAN hear and receive the word. I’ll let my opponent take his choice:

They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

Mt 13:15 - their eyes THEY have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, & hear with their ears, & should understand with their heart, & should be converted

Until they loosen their necks/hearts, sinners won’t be able to receive instruction from God (Jer 17:23, 19:15).

They must change their hearts (open their eyes) – Jer 4:14:

Wash your heart from wickedness, that you may be saved

A sinner should change -> hear & soften his heart.

John 8:47

Must Be Of God To Hear God?

“Of God” here is equivalent to “child of God.” Does my opponent agree with the Primitive Baptists that you have to be saved first before you can hear God’s word effectively & believe?

Illustration – “Reagan Democrats”:

He that is a true Republican voted for Ronald Reagan: you didn’t vote for Reagan because you are not a true Republican.

This doesn’t mean that the only ones that voted for Reagan were true Republicans (many “Reagan Democrats” voted for Reagan). It does mean that if you didn’t vote for Reagan, you were not a true Republican.

Similarly, John 8:47 doesn’t say that only those who are Christians can hear God’s word (many passages like Rom 10:13-14 teach that a person must hear and believe before he is saved). John 8:47 is saying that if you don’t hear (obey) God, that proves you are not a faithful Christian.

Not hearing is our fault, not God’s!

John 12:40, etc.

God Blinds And Hardens

We agree sinners are blind and hardened. The question is, did God force that upon them, or do sinners become blinded & hardened by choice?

Eccl 7:29 – “God hath made man UPRIGHT”

Mt 13:15 - “and their eyes THEY have closed”

Sometimes, God does things though means:

- God hardened Pharaoh’s heart Ex 7:13, 9:12, 10:1
- Pharaoh hardened his own heart Ex 8:15, 8:32, 9:34

How can both be true? God hardened Pharaoh’s heart through means (relief from the 10 plagues), and not against his will.

Indeed, men harden themselves:

Jer 17:23 But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

Jer 19:15 ... because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

Solution: Acts 26:17-18 Paul sent to open eyes
Ezek 18:31 -“make you a new heart”

Our spiritual blindness is our fault, not God’s!

Romans 3:10-11

Rom 3:10-11 - ... There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

This passage does NOT teach that anybody inherits sin, but that all DO sin -> vs.12-16,23:

They are all GONE (not born) out of the way, they are together BECOME (not born) unprofitable; there is none that DOETH good, no, not one. ... WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY HAVE USED DECEIT; the poison of asps is under their lips; Whose MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING and bitterness: Their FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD: DESTRUCTION and misery are IN THEIR WAYS ... For all HAVE SINNED, and come short of the glory of God.

Not born that way, but turned to that way:

Is 53:6 – All we like sheep have gone astray,
we have turned every one to his own way

Gen 6:12 – all flesh had corrupted his way
upon the earth

Deut 32:5 – they have corrupted themselves

This passage teaches the same as Rom 3:23:

For all have sinned and, and come short of the glory of God.

Romans 5:12-21

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, **FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED**

Verse 12 & context teach two indisputable facts:

1. Sin entered into the world through Adam, and death by sin. So men die spiritually due to Adam's sin only in that he started it. He sinned, therefore he died spiritually. That opened the door for others to do the same. But they all die spiritually due to their own sin. That brings us to the second fact ...
2. Death (spiritual) passes upon all men, **BECAUSE "ALL HAVE SINNED."**

Rom 5:12-21 blames Adam for the introduction of sin into the world, but puts blame on us for our own spiritual death.

Other verses in the context, for example, verse 19:

by one man's disobedience many were made sinners are true in that through Adam, sin entered into the world. He got the ball rolling. But verse 12 adds that "**death passed upon all men, FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED.**" This is our position, not yours.

Romans 5:12 - In Whom?

My opponent responds to Rom 5:12 by saying that "for that" (eph 'o) is better translated "in whom," so that the passage would read, "... and so death passed upon all men, IN WHOM (Adam) all have sinned."

Sanday and Headlam in "The International Critical Commentary Series" give two reasons why "in whom" is incorrect:

"epi would not be the right preposition" (would be "en") "ho would be too far removed from its antecedent"

Arndt & Gingrich - for this reason that, because ... for, indeed

Thayer - for that, on the ground of this, that ... because that, because

James D.G. Dunn - The classic debate on the meaning of ep ho has more or less been settled in favor of the meaning "for this reason that, because" ... "in view of the fact"

C.F.D. Moule, An Idiom Book Of New Testament Greek, Cambridge University Press, 2nd Edition, 1979, p.132: "eph 'o" in II Cor 5:4 and Rom 5:12 almost certainly means INASMUCH AS (the IN QUO interpretation of Rom 5:12, closely connected with theories of Original Sin, is almost certainly wrong)."

Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, An Analysis Of The Greek New Testament, Biblical Institute Press, 1981, p.470: "inasmuch as, seeing that."

Nigel Turner, Grammar Of New Testament Greek, Volume III, Syntax, T&T Clark, 1963, p.272: "Rom 5:12, II Cor 5:4, eph 'o because."

Romans 5:12, 19

Jackie Robinson

Wherefore, as by one man black players entered into Major League Baseball (MLB), and big money to black MLB players; and so big money passed upon all black MLB players, for that all black MLB players have played.

You wouldn't think all the black players inherited Jackie Robinson's salaries would you?

Verse 19:

For by one man's play many blacks were made players.

Jackie Robinson paved the way for other blacks by being the first. He got it started; he got the ball rolling.

Adam paved the way for other people to sin by being the first to sin. He got it started; he got the ball rolling.

Rom 5:12b for that all have sinned!

Romans 8:7

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE.

We agree that the carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God. The question is, "is it possible for one who has a carnal mind to change his mind and be spiritually minded?"

A regenerated man who returns back to the carnal life (I Cor 1:2, 3:1-3), has a carnal mind, but my opponent doesn't believe he is "totally depraved." My opponent doesn't believe that it is impossible for him to change his mind and become subject again to the law of God.

So the one who is carnally minded (not spiritually minded), the one who "minds the things of the flesh" (v.5) obviously "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" he is going to have to change his mind first!

We can and must crucify the flesh (Gal 5:24), that is, mortify the deeds of the body (Rom 8:13). It is up to us. God asks, but doesn't force

I Corinthians 2:14

I Corinthians 2:14:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- First of all, the natural man here does not refer to the unregenerated man necessarily, but it refers to the man without (or who rejects) revelation - vs.9-13.
- This verse does say that the "natural" man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, but it does NOT say that the natural man cannot change from natural thinking to spiritual thinking.
- Unconverted man CAN receive the word - Acts 2:41, 8:14, 11:1
- Not only can the unconverted man understand the word, the unconverted man MUST understand the word - Mt 13:15:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, AND SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND SHOULD BE CONVERTED, and I should heal them.

I Cor 2:14 is simply saying that a man without revelation from God cannot know God's law. That is exactly what I teach!

I Corinthians 15:22

"The Fact That Infants Die Physically Proves Their Guilt"

(Hardshell Baptist - April, 1991)

The truth is, infants die physically directly because of physical laws of nature, sickness, etc.

Infants die physically indirectly because of Adam's sin - I Cor 15:22:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Because of his sin, Adam was cast out of the garden of Eden, thereby losing access to the tree of life (Gen 3:22-24). Because of this, babies (or anybody) do not have access to the tree of life to "live for ever."

But suffering physical consequences because of someone else's sin, does not imply the transfer of spiritual guilt. Bible examples include:

- II Sam 12:14, 18 - David's son died physically because of David's sin with Bathsheba, and against Uriah. Did David's son also die spiritually because of his Father's sin?
- I Sam 28:18-19, 31:6 - Saul's three sons (including Jonathon - 31:2) died physically because of Saul's sin. Did Jonathon also die spiritually because of Saul's sin?
- II Sam 21:1,5-6 after Saul's death, famine, and seven descendants of Saul killed because Saul slew the Gibeonites
- II Chron 33, II Kings 24:3-4 after Manasseh's death, God brings nations against Judah because of Manasseh's sin

The fact that infants die physically proves nothing about their spiritual state. If it did, it would prove that they are all LOST spiritually!

Ephesians 2:1

And you hath he quickened, who were DEAD in trespasses and sins.

dead - "destitute of a life that recognizes and is devoted to God, ... **INACTIVE** as respects doing right" (definition given by Thayer for this word in this verse) -> Not inability, but inactivity !

If Eph 2:1 means sinners can't do right, then Rom 6 would teach that Christians can't sin:

v.11 Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be DEAD (same Greek word) indeed UNTO SIN
v.2 God forbid. How shall we, that are DEAD TO SIN, live any longer therein?

Eph 2:1 says these dead sinners were quickened and Psalms 119:50b says that "thy word hath quickened me." So obviously, sinners aren't so "dead" they can't respond to God's word.

The Ephesians were "dead" in sin, not by birth, but for these reasons as specified in the text:

v.2 walked according to the course of this world
v.3 lived in the lusts of our flesh
v.3 indulging the desires of the flesh NASV

These reasons are what they DID, not inherited!

Ephesians 2:3

Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath ...

- nature (phusis) - "a mode of feeling and acting which by LONG HABIT has become nature" (Thayer's definition for this word in Eph 2:3)
- Jer 13:23 talks about people "that are accustomed to do evil." That is all Eph 2:3 is talking about. After practicing something for so long, it just becomes "2nd nature."
- these folks had "given themselves over unto" (Eph 4:19) sin; they weren't born that way
- If Eph 2:3 means that people are born sinners, then Rom 2:14 would teach that people are born righteous -> but it can't be both ways !

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by NATURE (same Greek word, #5449) the things contained in the law ...

Ephesians 2:3 doesn't have anything to do with inherited sin; instead it is simply saying that the Ephesians had been **HABITUAL SINNERS**.

Ephesians 2:3 - by nature the children of wrath **By Birth Or By Choice?**

NOT - “by original sin the children of wrath ...”

The following illustrations demonstrate a meaning for “by nature” other than “by birth”:

- New York City residents are BY NATURE a more cautious people, due to the high crime rate there.
- Most Alabama football fans are BY NATURE more zealous than fans of other teams, possibly because of the great success the Crimson Tide enjoyed under their legendary coach, Paul “Bear” Bryant.
- Don Knotts played Barney Fife so much, the part became second NATURE to him.

The Ephesians were “by nature” the children of wrath, not by birth/inheritance, but for the following reasons stated right in the text -NASV

v.2 walked according to the course of this world

v.3 lived in the lusts of our flesh

v.3 indulging the desires of the flesh

These reasons are what they DID, not inherited!

II Tim 2:25, Acts 11:18, 5:31

God Gives Repentance

Yes God gives repentance, but is it conditionally through means, or arbitrarily through force?

God desires “that all should come to repentance” (II Pet 3:9). So repentance is not forced upon us, else all would repent and be saved.

God said to the Israelites in Josh 6:2, “I have GIVEN into thine hand Jericho,” but the rest of the chapter shows that the Israelites still had to do something in order to receive the city.

How does God give repentance? By calling on people to repent and by leading them to repentance:

Luke 5:32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Rom 2:4 ... the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance

In Acts 5:31, Peter says that God exalted Christ to “give repentance to Israel,” but he had just gotten through commanding Israelites to repent (2:38, 3:19). So obviously God gives us repentance by leading us (by persuasion, not force, II Cor 5:11) through his word (Jn 6:44-45) to choose to repent.

Hebrews 7:9-10

Levi Paid Tithes In Abraham's Loins

If I inherit my Father's property and possessions, then I sold property in my Father's loins before I was born, not in the sense that I participated in the sale, but in the sense that I am affected by the sale.

Similarly, we did not participate in the sin of Adam, but we are affected by its consequences (physical death).

And my opponent understands this, else the logical conclusion is that we participated in all of Adam's actions, including relations with Eve.

Jesus was in the loins of Adam; did He sin also?

The Bible says that Levi paid tithes in Abraham's loins, but the Bible NEVER says that we sinned in Adam's loins.

Ezekiel 18:20: The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, ... the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.