

Romans 5:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin— Paul begins the crucial Adam-Christ typology extending through verse 21. The διὰ τοῦτο (dia touto, 'wherefore/therefore') connects to preceding arguments about justification and introduces comparison: as one man (Adam) brought condemnation, one Man (Christ) brings justification. The historical entrance of ἁμαρτία (hamartia, 'sin') through Adam establishes universal human guilt; death (θάνατος, thanatos) follows as sin's penalty (Genesis 2:17, 3:19).

And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (καὶ οὕτως εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διῆλθεν, ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον)—the phrase ἐφ' ᾧ (eph' hō) is debated: 'because/in that/in whom all sinned.' Whether in Adam (federal headship) or by personal sin ratifying Adamic guilt, Paul's point stands: death's universality proves sin's universality. This verse grounds the doctrine of original sin—humanity's solidarity in Adam's transgression and consequent corruption.

Historical Context

Paul assumes Genesis 1-3 as literal history—Adam as historical first man whose fall had cosmic consequences. This was Jewish theological consensus but would challenge Greco-Roman philosophical notions of humanity's innate goodness or cyclic history without decisive historical turning points. The doctrine of the Fall

explained humanity's universal moral failure and misery, providing the necessary backdrop for understanding salvation through the Second Adam.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does federal headship under Adam (being represented by him and affected by his sin) help you understand representation under Christ?
2. What contemporary ideologies deny original sin—and how does that denial affect views of human nature and salvation?
3. If death proves universal human sinfulness, what does Christ's resurrection prove about those united to Him?

Interlinear Text

διὰ	τοῦτο	ὥσπερ	διὰ	ένος	άνθρώπους	ή	
Wherefore	G5124	as	Wherefore	one	man	G3588	
G1223		G5618	G1223	G1520	G444		
άμαρτίας	εἰς	τόν	κόσμον	εἰσήλθεν	καί	διὰ	τῆς
sin	into	G3588	the world	entered	and	Wherefore	G3588
G266	G1519		G2889	G1525	G2532	G1223	
άμαρτίας	ὁ	θάνατος	καί	οὕτως	εἰς	πάντες	άνθρώπους
sin	G3588	death	and	so	into	all	man
G266		G2288	G2532	G3779	G1519	G3956	G444
ὁ	θάνατος	διήλθεν	ἐφ'	ὧ	πάντες	ἥμαρτον·	
G3588	death	passed	for	that	all	have sinned	
	G2288	G1330	G1909	G3739	G3956	G264	

Additional Cross-References

Romans 5:19 (Sin): For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Romans 6:23 (Sin): For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 3:23 (Sin): For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

James 1:15 (Sin): Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Genesis 2:17 (Parallel theme): But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Psalms 51:5 (Sin): Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Genesis 3:19 (Parallel theme): In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Genesis 3:6 (Parallel theme): And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Romans 5:21 (Sin): That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 18:4 (Sin): 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.