

Association of Hebrew Catholics Lecture Series
The Mystery of Israel and the Church

Spring 2009 – Series #4
Themes of St. Paul

Talk #4
God's Plan for Salvation History
– Christ as the New Adam



© **Dr. Lawrence Feingold STD**
Associate Professor of Theology and Philosophy
Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, Archdiocese of St. Louis, Missouri

Note: *This document contains the unedited text of Dr. Feingold's talk. It will eventually undergo final editing for inclusion in the series of books being published by The Miriam Press under the series title: "The Mystery of Israel and the Church". If you find errors of any type, please send your observations to lfeingold@hebrewcatholic.org*

This document may be copied and given to others. It may not be modified, sold, or placed on any web site. The actual recording of this talk, as well as the talks from all series, may be found on the AHC website at: <http://www.hebrewcatholic.org/Studies/MysteryofIsraelChurch/mysteryofisraela.html>



Association of Hebrew Catholics • 4120 W Pine Blvd • Saint Louis MO 63108
www.hebrewcatholic.org • ahc@hebrewcatholic.org

4. God's Plan for Salvation History – Christ as the New Adam (Rom. 5-8)

In the Letter to the Romans St. Paul develops the theme of Christ as the new Adam, who through His Passion repairs our fallen state resulting from original sin and compounded by our personal sins, and elevates us to untold glory.

Original Sin and Its Consequences

Before treating the Redemption and restoration worked by Christ, St. Paul speaks of the state of sin from which the Messiah comes to save us. In the fifth chapter of the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul speaks of original sin, and compares the consequences of the Fall with the greater positive consequences of Christ's Redemption. In Rom 5:12 St. Paul gives the Scriptural basis for the Catholic understanding of original sin:

Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned [or "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned"].

According to either translation, the meaning is that all men have received the state of original sin through Adam, and thus the penalty of original sin has passed to all. St. Paul reflects here the Jewish understanding of original sin as it is presented in Genesis 3.

Adam and Eve in the Garden were the recipients of an original covenant with God. Gratuitous gifts were given to them over and above human nature, and a condition was exacted for the continuance of those gifts. The condition is given in Gen 2:16-17: "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." A commandment was given to Adam and Eve so that they would acknowledge their dependence on God as creatures through obedience.

Adam and Eve were created as recipients of a threefold gift. They were bearers of a threefold treasure: (a) the life of human nature, (b) preternatural gifts perfecting nature by raising it to an angelic immortality, and (c) sanctifying grace elevating them into a share in the divine life.

Adam and Eve were thus elevated so as to live not only in the natural human order, but were also given to share in angelic privileges and in the divine life itself; they were simultaneously in three orders: natural, preternatural, and supernatural; human, angelic, and divine.

The highest gift of all was the elevation to a sharing in God's divine life and friendship through sanctifying grace, and the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. In

theology, the word "supernatural" refers to a divine gift by which mankind is gratuitously elevated to have a share in the divine life. The gift by which we are given this life is referred to as grace, precisely because it is utterly gratuitous with respect to human nature. It is in no way due to human nature to share in the divine life.

In addition to these supernatural gifts, we see from Gen 2:25 that Adam and Eve received other *preternatural* gifts. The word "praeter" in Latin means "beyond." "Preternatural" thus means "beyond nature." This word is used in theology to signify perfections that are above the limits of human nature, but nevertheless do not imply a participation in the life of God; and thus are not said to be grace or "supernatural." The preternatural gifts are gifts proper to angelic nature, which would have made humanity sharers in four angelic privileges: immortality¹, immunity from suffering, infused knowledge², and immunity from the onslaught of the disordered passions of the concupiscible and irascible appetites. This last preternatural gift is known as *integrity*.

The gift of integrity can be seen in the fact that Adam and Eve were naked and were not ashamed. Their nakedness before the Fall caused no disordered concupiscence such as to lead them to see the other as an *object* of gratification (instead of a *person*), which in turn would trigger shame. Thus theologians deduce that their lack of shame shows that they had been given the gift of interior freedom from the constraint of passion and instinctual movement, a dominion of the spiritual faculties over the body and its passions.

This gift of integrity involved a freedom from the disordered inclinations of the triple concupiscence that marks human life after the Fall, described for us in 1 Jn 2:16: "For all that is in the world, the *lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life*, is not of the Father but is of the world."

In summary, original justice entailed a manifold gift of supernatural and preternatural harmony: harmony between man and God through grace, the inner harmony of the human person through the gift of integrity, "the harmony between man and woman, and finally the harmony between the first couple and all creation."³

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* goes on to state that "the 'mastery' over the world that God offered man

1 The gift of immortality can be gathered from the punishment of death attached to disobedience.

2 Infused knowledge is evident in the fact that Adam and Eve had some elevated knowledge of their Creator and His will.

3 CCC 376.

from the beginning was realized above all within man himself: *mastery of self*. The first man was unimpaired and ordered in his whole being because he was free from the triple concupiscence that subjugates him to the pleasures of the senses, covetousness for earthly goods, and self-assertion, contrary to the dictates of reason.”⁴

After the sin of Eve and Adam, however, the covenant was broken and the gratuitous gifts were taken away. The consequence was that human nature had to taste its own inherent limitations by being deprived of the gratuitous gifts which were lost.

What was lost? The most important consequence is not directly named but is clearly visible. Adam and Eve lost the intimate friendship with God that they had previously enjoyed. This friendship is metaphorically conveyed in Gen 3:8-10 through the figure of “walking with God.” After the sin, Adam and Eve no longer walk with God in the garden in the “cool of the day,” but hide themselves from Him, showing their loss of union with God:

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

Catholic theology understands the friendship that was lost in terms of grace: sanctifying grace, from which charity flows. Sanctifying grace makes us “participants in the divine nature” (cf. 2 Pt 1:4) and charity puts us into intimate friendship with God whom we love above ourselves and all things. Adam and Eve lost charity because they sinned against it. Their sin consisted in desiring something *above God*, for they desired to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil more than they desired to remain in friendship with God. They preferred the apple—and the moral autonomy it signifies (determining good and evil for themselves)—to obedience to and friendship with God.

Secondly, Adam and Eve lost the four preternatural gifts. The most obvious of these is the loss of the gift of immortality. In Gen 3:19, God says to Adam: “*In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*” Together with mortality goes suffering and hardship which from that moment are attached to human work, childbirth, and the struggle for existence. A third consequence is the ignorance in which we are born and which has engulfed the human family. Finally, instead of the gift of integrity ensuring interior harmony, we come into the world with what is called *concupiscence*: the innate tendency of our sense appetites to seek sensible goods that gratify the senses but which all too frequently come into

clash with right reason. Thus every human life subject to original sin is a life of conflict in which concupiscence tempts us with sin.

Concupiscence is not sin in itself, but it is a fruit of original sin, and a temptation leading us to personal sin if we do not dominate it. The Jewish rabbinical tradition speaks of concupiscence with the term “*yetzer ha-ra'*,” which literally means “evil inclination.”

Human nature remains intact in Adam and Eve after the Fall, and in all their children. However, the gratuitous gifts with which it was enriched in the Garden were taken away, leaving human nature stripped of its garment of grace (called “original justice” by theologians), and continually tempted by the *yetzer ha-ra'* (evil inclination).

We see the presence of the *yetzer ha-ra'* in Adam and Eve themselves right after the Fall, as its second consequence. After hiding themselves from God (indicating the loss of sanctifying grace), they hid their nakedness from one another, experiencing shame as a result of concupiscence. The loss of grace was thus followed by the loss of the gift of integrity, resulting in the universal experience of concupiscence.

The term concupiscence makes us think of the sexual sphere, but it is not limited to that. It refers to the *tendency of all of our passions to tempt us frequently to act contrary to right reason*, whether through lust, anger, covetousness, gluttony, sloth, depression, envy, etc. The loss of the gift of integrity and the presence of the evil inclination (concupiscence) is what makes us prone to the capital sins. Pride and envy of God alone were capable of tempting Adam and Eve before their sin. In Eden there was no temptation to lust, sloth, gluttony, anger, or depression. After the Fall, however, they tend to dominate human life insofar as we are not fortified with grace and virtue.

We see the force of the *yetzer ha-ra'* already in Gen 4:6-7, as God says to Cain who is envious of Abel: “Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is couching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

The experience of passion did not necessitate Cain's sin, for God said that he could dominate it, but it surely facilitated his sin.

We see the presence of the *yetzer ha-ra'* also in the account of the flood. In Gen 6:5 we read that God “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination (*yetzer*) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Again in Gen 8:21 God says that “the imagination (*yetzer*) of man's heart is evil from his youth.”

We see the notion of original sin and its transmission to all the sons of Adam alluded to also in the penitential

4 CCC 377.

psalm of David, Ps 51:5: “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

Perhaps the most poignant description of the loss of the gift of integrity is given by St. Paul in Rom 7:12-23. In this chapter, Paul is discussing the Law of Moses, its intrinsic goodness and its limitation. The Law is good in that it points out what is evil by prohibiting it. Nevertheless, universal human experience shows that it is not sufficient to know the Law in order to observe it, for we discover a conflicting tendency through the presence of concupiscence. St. Paul writes:

So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. I do not understand my own actions. *For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.* Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. *I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.* Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that *when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members.*

Who does not share this experience? Human life after the Fall is an experience of conflict between the noble precepts of the Law in which the reason of a good man delights, and a contrary tendency which we experience in our passions: the *yetzer ha-ra'*, inciting us to the capital sins. Even though our reason approves of the law of God as made known in the Commandments, we find that we do not always act in accordance with reason, through succumbing to the disordered inclinations of the passions.

It is important to see that this realistic description of the human condition does not imply the complete corruption of human nature. St. Paul's description presupposes that man can naturally grasp the goodness of God's Law through the power of conscience, and that man's will is capable of loving God's Law and delighting in it. Original sin has not destroyed our capacity to know the truth, to will the good, or to freely choose it. Human nature—being a rational animal—has not been destroyed. However, original sin has taken away the original harmony that prevailed in man so that he would not feel the rebellion and contrary persuasion of the passions. That original state was above

human nature, for it is natural for a rational animal to feel conflict between his animal instincts and his reason. The conflict that St. Paul describes is proper to a rational animal left to himself, and deprived of original justice (the gift of integrity) elevating what is animal in man to an angelic level.

Martin Luther, on the contrary, tended to understand original sin in a more extreme sense as the complete corruption of human nature. This corruption would be so extreme that man would not be able to know the truth by his reason or to love the good with his will so as to freely choose it and avoid sin.

For example, he wrote: “Conceived in sorrow and corruption, the child sins even in his mother's womb. . . . It commits iniquity and incurs damnation. As he grows, the innate element of corruption develops. Man has said to sin, ‘thou art my father,’ and every act he performs is an offense against God; and to the worms, ‘You are my brothers,’ and he crawls like them in mire and corruption. . . . He is so thoroughly corrupted that it is absolutely impossible for him to produce good actions. Sin is his nature; he cannot help committing it. Man may do his best to be good, still his every action is unavoidably bad; he commits a sin as often as he draws his breath.”⁵

Luther's doctrine is more radical than the text of Paul. For the Apostle, human nature is not totally corrupt, for our reason and will are still capable of delighting in the Law of the Lord. The problem is that we experience another contradictory inclination coming from our sense appetites that can seduce our reason and will, leading to the commission of sin. We have the power—through the possession of reason and will—to resist the evil inclination, the *yetzer ha-ra'*, as God told Cain, in each individual temptation. Otherwise sin would not be culpable. We will not be able to consistently resist temptation, however, without the aid of grace, merited for us by Christ.

For Luther, man is so corrupt that he cannot resist temptation at all. He compares human life and the human will to a horse ridden by two riders: God or the devil. If God rides the steed of our life then we will not sin, but if the devil rides then we are necessitated to sin:

In short, if we are under the god of this world [the devil], . . . we are held captive to his will, as Paul says to Timothy [2 Tim 2:26], so that we cannot will anything but what he wills. . . . But if a Stronger One comes who overcomes him and takes us as His spoil, then through his Spirit we are again slaves and captives—though this is royal freedom—so that we readily will and do what he wills. Thus the human will is placed between the two like a beast of burden. If God rides it, it wills

5 Commentary on the Psalms (Ps. 50), Wittenberg III, p. 518. Quoted in Patrick O'Hare, *The Facts About Luther* (Rockford, IL: TAN, 1987), pp. 99-100.

and goes where God wills. . . . If Satan rides it, it wills and goes where Satan wills; nor can it choose to run to either of the two riders or to seek him out, but the riders themselves contend for the possession and control of it.⁶

It should be observed that Luther's doctrine here is contradictory. If it were really true that we lacked the free will to avoid sin, then there would be no human sin at all, for the very notion of sin implies moral responsibility, which implies human freedom to choose.

Secondly, it should be observed that Luther confuses nature and grace (the natural and the supernatural orders). It is true that we cannot do any acts that merit salvation (supernatural acts moved by charity) without grace. However, without sanctifying grace, we can still do many good acts on the natural level, such as the acts of the cardinal virtues, as witnessed by the lives of many pagans and unbelievers. The unbeliever (or any person living in a state of mortal sin) does not necessarily sin in every act, but only sometimes: when he chooses to consent to something against his conscience.

Third, Luther confuses the experience of concupiscence (the disordered desires of our appetites) with sin itself. *It is not a sin to experience an evil inclination.* Sin lies in freely consenting to a disordered action. Furthermore, he seems to have identified concupiscence with original sin, whereas it is only a consequence of original sin. The essence of original sin is the deprivation of sanctifying grace, which is restored to us by Baptism.

Jewish theologians often confuse the Catholic with the Protestant position, and state that the Jewish position is not equivalent with the Christian view. In reality, what they are rejecting is the Lutheran view. For example, an interesting article on sin in *The Encyclopedia of Judaism* by Alan Avery-Peck says:

While the Rabbinic idea of the evil inclination suggests that people have the innate tendency to sin, this notion should not be confused with the Christian concept of original sin, to which it is not equivalent. Contrary to the concept of original sin, according to the Rabbinic Judaism people do not have an inherited, corrupt nature.⁷

Likewise in the Catholic view man does not have a corrupt nature. His nature remains "very good" (Gen 1:31) in mind and will, and capable of virtue, but it is stripped of the gratuitous aids that were given to Adam and Eve above human nature.⁸ This loss is a just punishment for Adam's

6 *The Bondage of the Will*, in *Luther's Works*, vol. 33, *Career of the Reformer*, III, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), pp. 65-66.

7 Alan J. Avery-Peck, "Sin in Judaism," in *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, ed. by Jacob Neusner, Avery-Peck, William Scott Green (New York: Continuum, 1999), vol. 3, p. 1324.

8 The rabbinical tradition also recognizes the continued goodness of human nature, even though we inherit the the *yetzer ha-ra'*. See Avery-Peck, "Sin in Judaism," p. 1326, which quotes Genesis Rab. 9:7.

sin, and also provides us an arena for merit through gradually dominating the evil inclination through grace and the development of virtue.

Furthermore, the evil inclination is not simply a given, but is something that can greatly increase as a result of personal sins. Every additional sin strengthens the *yetzer ha-ra'*. The rabbinical tradition recognizes this, saying: "*The inclination to do evil to begin with is like a spider's thread and in the end like cart ropes.*"⁹

Without grace, concupiscence cannot be consistently opposed so as to avoid sin. Again, the Rabbinic tradition recognizes this, saying: "*And if the Holy One, blessed be he, were not there to help him, he [the righteous man] could not withstand it [the yetzer ha-ra'].*"¹⁰

The Jewish tradition thus implores God daily to diminish the dominion of the the *yetzer ha-ra'*. In the introductory words of the morning prayer in the Siddur, Israel prays: "*O lead us not into the power of sin, or of transgression, or of iniquity, or of temptation; . . . let not the evil inclination have sway over us.*"

The action of grace and virtue combats the evil inclination and gradually subdues it (as sin increases it), but without ever being able to vanquish it completely, this side of heaven. We are saved from the evil inclination only in hope.

St. Paul poses the question of how the evil inclination can be overcome in dramatic terms. After his description of the *yetzer ha-ra'*, the "*law of sin which dwells in my members,*" he says:

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Baptism and justification restore man's will to friendship with God, but the evil inclination remains to be a "thorn in the flesh." Sanctifying grace enables Paul and all righteous men to "serve the law of God with their mind," but the flesh still retains the "law of sin."

Rabbinical tradition sees the study of Torah as the greatest antidote to the *yetzer ha-ra'*, serving as a kind of prophylactic against the evil inclination.¹¹ In the Christian Tradition and in St. Paul we also see the study of God's Law as a remedy for sin, but experience abundantly shows that knowledge of the Law is *not a sufficient remedy* to the *yetzer ha-ra'*. This is one of the great themes of the first

9 Attributed to Rabbi Assi, in B. Suk. 52a.

10 Attributed to R. Simeon b. Laqish, in B. Suk. 52a-b.

11 See the texts given by Avery-Peck, pp. 1327-1329. See, for example, B. Quid. 30b: "Keep yourselves occupied with teachings of the Torah, and [sin] will not control you. But if you leave off studying words of the Torah, lo, it will control you, as it is said, 'and to you is its desire' (Gen 4:7)."

part of the Letter to the Romans, in which he corrects this aspect of the rabbinical tradition. It is not enough to have the law written on tablets of stone, or memorized in one's mind. It must be written on the heart, and this is done only through grace, which is transmitted efficaciously through the sacraments of the Church, beginning with Baptism.

All Men—Jew and Gentile—Suffer the Consequences of Original Sin and All Need the Grace of Christ

What is the relevance of the doctrine of original sin to the salvation worked by Christ, which is the principal subject of the Letter to the Romans? First, the doctrine of original sin shows the universality of sin and the universal need for redemption. The beginning of the letter to the Romans stresses how all men are subject to the consequences of original sin.

St. Paul begins in chapter 2 by stressing that all, both pagans and Jews, are in need of the grace of Christ. The pagans, even though the philosophers have been able to know the existence and attributes of God and the fundamental elements of the natural moral law, have not given proper glory to God. The Jews likewise have not been able to consistently keep the moral law, as we see throughout the Old Testament.

The fact that all are under the bondage of sin does not mean that Israel has received no privilege from their election. Their privilege is great because they were entrusted with the “oracles of God”: His prophecies, promises, and commandments. Nevertheless, they need the forgiveness won by the Cross of Christ no less than the Gentiles:

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means! . . . What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all; for I have already charged that all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one. . .” (Rom 3:1-10)

The liturgy of Yom Kippur recognizes the universal presence of personal sins in Israel, as Israel prays:

My God, before I was born, I was unworthy; and now that I have been born it is as though I have not been born. . . I stand before you like a vessel full of shame and disgrace. May it be your will Lord, my God, and God of my ancestors, that I not sin again. And the sins I already have committed against you—nullify them in your great mercy.

Rescue from the Consequences of Original and Personal Sin through Christ

What then is the remedy for the plague of sin—original and personal? How are they to be nullified? As sin entered the world through one man—Adam, the original head of the human family—so God decreed that the forgiveness of sins and the resulting holiness come into the world through a new Adam—Jesus Christ. St. Paul develops this parallelism in the fifth chapter of the letter to the Romans. He writes:

Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

Here Paul says that Adam is a type or figure of Christ, which means that he was made in some ways parallel—both positively and negatively—to the Messiah who was to come. Adam was entrusted with the responsibility of passing on not only natural gifts but also supernatural ones to all his descendants. Instead, through his sin, he passed on the deprivation of those gifts. Thus original sin, and its consequence of death, is passed on to all the sons and daughters of Adam.¹² Paul continues:

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. Law came in, to increase the trespass; but *where sin increased, grace abounded all the more*, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 5:15-21)

St. Paul announces a tremendous truth in Rom 5:20: “*Where sin abounded, grace did more abound.*” God permits evil to bring forth a greater good. This is the true reason for the existence of evil in the world. He permitted the original sin of Adam so as to draw forth a greater

¹² Adam is a figure of Christ by both similarity and opposition. Adam is a similar figure of Christ in that he was head of the human family and was meant to be the source of the transmission of supernatural gifts. Christ is the new and better Head, and the source of new and better supernatural gifts. On the other hand, Adam is an opposite figure of Christ in that he is a source of universal death, whereas Christ is the source of universal supernatural life.

redemption that will give more glory to God than is taken away by original sin and the entire collection of all human sins that spread from that first sin.

The charity of Christ in His Passion, who died for us when we were sinners so as to make us participants of His life of justice and charity, outweighs all the weight of human sin. Christ's Passion is more beautiful than all sin is ugly; it is more abundant in good than sin is abundant in evil. For where sin has abounded, "grace has abounded all the more."

Salvation through Grace

The salvation worked by Christ could not be worked by the Law of Moses, or by any written law. The Law of Moses could not undo the effects of original sin that worked in humanity since Adam. The Law tells us what we are to do, but does not by that very fact enable us to do it. There are two reasons for this. On the one hand, we are beset by the *yetzer ha-ra'*, by which we are tempted and led into sin. Secondly, without grace, we cannot have divine charity and thus we cannot do any act meritorious for heaven. Every man, without an extraordinary intervention of God, comes into this world bereft of sanctifying grace and thus rendered incapable of achieving union with God in this life and in heaven.

What is needed is a new covenant by which the disinheritance worked through Adam's sin might be annulled and a new inheritance established in a new Head of the human race, in whom we are to be incorporated through grace.

In order for grace to superabound over sin, it is necessary that the new Head of humanity be a better head than Adam. Adam was merely a man, although elevated by grace. Christ, the new Adam, is the God-man, whose humanity is anointed by His divinity. This is the true meaning of His title, *Mashiach* or Messiah ("Christ" in Greek), which means anointed one. Christ is anointed not with holy oil or chrism, but with the chrism of the divine nature. Thus Paul speaks of Him as the "*image of the invisible God*" (Col 1:15), in whom "*are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*" (Col 2:3). "*In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross*" (Col 1:19-20). A better head than Adam, Christ wins back for mankind the inheritance lost by Adam, precisely by atoning for Adam's sin with "the blood of his cross," offered to God with immeasurable charity.

Insertion into Christ through Baptism

How are we inserted into Christ? In Rom 6 Paul expounds the theology of Baptism. He begins by putting forth an objection. If God can draw a greater good out of evil, so that even the abounding of sin may draw forth a still more abundant good, perhaps we ought to continue

in sin, so that grace may abound still more? Paul answers no, for we have died to sin in Baptism:

By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were *baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.* For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. (Rom 6:2-14)

Baptism effects the insertion of a person into Christ's death and resurrection; into His atoning death and into His supernatural life.

The seven sacraments instituted by Christ have the unique property of realizing what they symbolize, as long as we do not pose an obstacle (through lack of repentance) to the sacrament.

The immersion into water in Baptism symbolizes two things: washing from all sin, and death and rebirth with Christ. The descent into the water symbolizes death with Christ, and the ascent out of the water symbolizes spiritual rebirth in the likeness of Christ's Resurrection. We are washed from sin precisely by being inserted into the mystery of Christ's life, and especially in His Passion and Resurrection. We are freed from sin by being given the gift of a share in Christ's own interior life through sanctifying grace, by which our past sins are forgiven, and by which we are made pleasing to God. This gift has been won for us through Christ's death, and it must cause in us a death to sin, and a new life in the Spirit.

Rom 8: Liberation through the Spirit of Christ

The nature of this new life in the Spirit is described with exultation in Rom 8. After speaking at length of the universal dominion of sin, here St. Paul rejoices in the victory

over sin worked by the gift of Christ's life in the Spirit. He begins by saying that even though concupiscence—the *yetzer ha-ra'*, remains in the baptized, it is not culpable in us and is no cause for condemnation, as long as we do not consent to it in a matter of mortal sin. Paul says that “there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” He continues:

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Rom 8:2-4)

Christ's Passion has paid for us the satisfaction for sin, and merited the gift of new life in the Spirit. Together with sanctifying grace God infuses a whole series of spiritual gifts, which are attributed in a special way to the Holy Spirit, for they are the supreme work of the divine love. First of all, God infuses the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. With them He also infuses all the moral virtues in germ, and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. The crowning gift is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (and of the entire Trinity), who dwells in us through charity as the Beloved in the heart of the lover. All of these gifts work a supernatural transformation of the soul of those who are justified, enabling us to live according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh:

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. (Rom 8:5-13)

St. Paul thus contrasts two ways of life: according to the old man not yet regenerated, and the new man regenerated

in Christ and living according to the Spirit. The old man lives “according to the flesh,” according to desires of the *yetzer ha-ra'*, which is the triple concupiscence of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life. The new man lives according to the Spirit and the life of Christ who indwells. The gift of sanctifying grace gives us a share in Christ's Sonship. It makes us sons of God in the Son. St. Paul writes:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Rom 8:14-17)

The Holy Spirit conforms us to Christ in our internal sentiments, so that we can embrace suffering in union with Christ, animated by the hope of fuller union:

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. . . . For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. (Rom 8:18-28)

The union with Christ worked by faith, hope, and charity, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, being supernatural, is stronger than any natural force, and cannot be destroyed by anything except mortal sin. This conviction in the power of the life of the Spirit is what animates the martyrs:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, “For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:35-39)