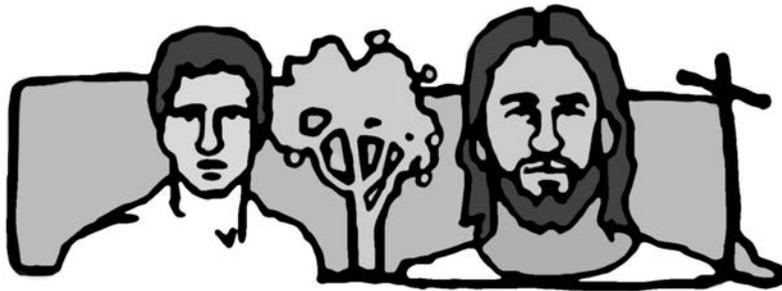


Adam and Jesus



SABBATH—NOVEMBER 4

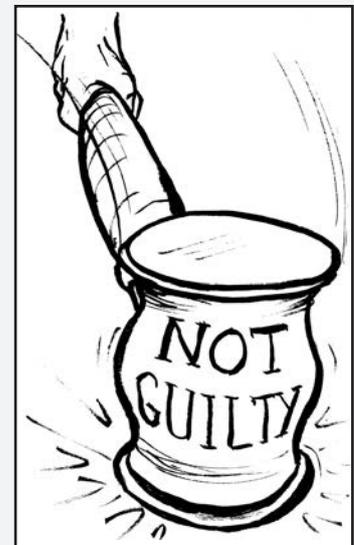
READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Romans 5.

MEMORY VERSE: “We have been made right with God because of our faith. So we have peace with God through [because of] our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1, 2, ICB).

PAUL said that God accepts us because of our faith in Jesus. Another name for our being accepted by God is justification by faith. Our justification comes from Jesus' saving power. Another name for Jesus' saving power is righteousness. Only Jesus' righteousness is enough to make us right with God. We saw how Paul builds on this important truth. First, Paul shows us that our being saved comes by faith, not works, even for someone as holy as Abraham. Then, Paul steps back to look at the big picture of God's plan to save us and asks: What caused sin, suffering, and death? How is the answer found in Jesus and the things He did for us?

Adam fell. This one man's sin caused the whole human family to come under the power of death. Adam's sin caused our separation from God. But Jesus won the victory over sin. By this one Man, Jesus, everyone has the chance to be saved. By our faith in Jesus, the record of our sins and the punishment for breaking the law can be removed forever.

Paul shows the difference between Adam and Jesus. Jesus came to fix what Adam did wrong. Jesus showed us that everyone injured by Adam's sin could be saved by faith in God. The Cross and Jesus' death as our Substitute open the way for everyone to be saved.



God takes away the record of our sins and the punishment for breaking the law when we accept Jesus.

WE ARE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD BY FAITH
(Romans 5:1–5)

What is Paul’s message in Romans 5:1–5? What can you learn from Paul’s message to make your faith grow?

“Being made right with God” has the same meaning as “have been made right with God.” The Greek verb for these wordings shows the action as already having been completed. This fact is good news. It shows us God accepts us and says we are holy. He makes us right with Himself when we accept Jesus. We are not made right from any good works we do by obeying the law. Instead, God accepts Jesus’ perfect record of obedience in place of our record of sin.

At the same time, God has put all of our sins on Jesus. God ruled that Jesus did those sins, not us. And so, we are free from the punishment we should suffer for sin. Our punishment fell on Jesus instead. He suffered our punishment for us so that we never would have to. What more wonderful news could there be for the sinner?

The Greek word written as “happy” in Romans 5:2 (ICB) is also written as “full of joy” in Romans 5:3 (NirV). This Greek word shows that people who have been made right with God are full of joy, even when they suffer. Suffering gives them the strength to go on. They put their faith and trust in Jesus. They are sure God will work out all things for their good. They feel that it is an honor to suffer for Jesus. (Read 1 Peter 4:13.)

Notice in Romans 5:3–5 the different ways we move forward in spiritual growth. Paul teaches that we first must grow in (1) strength, (2) then becoming holy, and, finally, (3) hope. Let us look at each part.

“The strength to go on” (NirV). This wording comes from a Greek word that means “to be faithful to the end.” This strength grows in people who have faith. This strength grows in believers who do not lose hope in Jesus. These believers stay faithful to God, even while they suffer.

“Stood [stayed loyal; passed] the test” (NLV). This wording comes from the Greek *dokime*. *Dokime* means “accepted thoughts, feelings, and actions.” So, people who stay patient will think, feel, and behave in a way God accepts.

“Hope” (NLV). Our loyalty to God causes us to think, feel, and act in a way God accepts. Our making God happy, gives us hope. Our hope is found in Jesus and the promise of being saved in Him. We must hold onto Him in faith and obey God. Then our hope will be strong.



We must hold onto Jesus in faith and obey God. Then our hope will be strong.

WHILE WE WERE SINNERS (Romans 5:6–8)

What hope do we find in Romans 5:6–8? What do these verses tell us about God’s character? Character is made up of a person’s thoughts, feelings, and actions. We know that God is holy and kind. These different parts of God’s character tell us about God.

Adam and Eve broke the law. There was no excuse for their sin. But their sin did not stop God from showing mercy to Adam and Eve. God led Adam and Eve back to peace with Himself. Ever since, God has led in doing everything that was needed to save us. God invites us to accept His plan to save us. That plan is Jesus.

Romans 5:9 says that Jesus saves us from God’s anger. How does Jesus save us from God’s anger?

The story in Exodus 12 tells how God freed Israel from slavery in Egypt. This story helps us understand how Jesus saves us from God’s anger. The night came for God to free His people from the Egyptians. Earlier, God told Moses that He would enter Egypt and kill every firstborn man and animal. God told Moses to tell the children of Israel to put blood on the doorframes of their houses. God would see the blood and would pass over the house. Then everyone inside the house would be protected from God’s anger that fell on Egypt’s firstborn. In the same way, the blood of Jesus protects us. Jesus’ blood is a promise that the person who has been made right with God and stays right with God will be safe when God’s anger destroys sin at the end of time.

Some people have a hard time accepting the idea of a loving God who is angry. But it is exactly *because* of God’s love that His anger against sin is real. Look at everything sin has done to damage the things God made on this earth. How could God not be angry at all the evil and ruin?

Read Romans 5:10, 11. What other reasons does Paul give us to be full of joy?

Paul seems to be putting importance on the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus is alive forever (Hebrews 7:25). But what would happen to us if Jesus stayed in the grave? Then our hopes would have died with Jesus. But Jesus lives. So, we are saved. That is the reason for our joy.



Look at what sin has done to damage the things God made on this earth. How could God not be angry at all the evil and ruin?

DEATH CAME BY SIN (Romans 5:12)

Death is an enemy. Perhaps, it is the worst enemy we ever will meet. After all, God did not make humans to die. No, God made us to live forever. Very few people want to die. People who die nearly always suffer a lot of pain and sorrow first. Death goes against our desire to live. From the minute our lives began, we were meant to live forever. God never meant for us to know anything about death.

Read Romans 5:12. What is Paul describing here? What does this verse explain?

Bible thinkers have argued more about the meaning of this verse than they have about almost any other verse in the Bible. Maybe the reason is because these people use this verse to mean things Paul never meant for it to mean.

Some Bible thinkers argue over what Adam's sin means. These Bible thinkers ask, How did Adam's sin cause a change in all his future children? Did all of Adam's future children share the guilt of Adam's sin? Or are they guilty in God's eyes because of their own sins? Many people have tried to get the answer to these questions from Romans 5:12. But Paul is not talking about these questions in this verse. Instead, Paul wants to bring our attention to the truth he already shared in Romans 3:23: "Everyone has sinned" (NirV). We need to accept we are sinners. When we accept this fact, we will understand our need for a Savior. In Romans 5:12, Paul wants his readers to accept that sin is bad and that Adam brought sin into our lives. Then Paul shows us that God offers us Jesus, who heals us from sin.

But Romans 5:12 tells only of the problem that Adam's sin brought—death. Romans 5:12 does not tell us about the answer to sin—life in Jesus. One of the most beautiful parts of the Good News that Jesus saves us by faith is that God has destroyed death. How? Jesus broke death's chains when He walked out of the grave. He says, "I am the Living One. I was dead. But now look! I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys to Death and Hell [the grave]" (Revelation 1:18, NirV). Jesus has the "keys" to unlock the grave. So, the enemy—death—can no longer hold us there.

What has been your own experience with how awful death is? Why must we have hope in something more than ourselves or anything this life offers?



Jesus broke the chains of death.

FROM ADAM TO MOSES (Romans 5:13, 14)

What do Paul’s words in Romans 5:13, 14 teach us about the law?

The wording “before the law was given” (NirV) in Romans 5:13 is closely connected to the wording “from the time of Adam to the time of Moses” (NirV) in Romans 5:14. What does Paul mean by connecting these two ideas together? He connects these ideas together to point us to the time from the beginning of this earth to Sinai. Now, this time period took place before God introduced His plan of worship to the Jews.

So, the wording “before the law was given” means before the time that God made His different laws known to Israel at Sinai. This wording shows that sin was a part of life on this earth long before Sinai. Sin had to be, right? After all, lying, killing, sex outside of marriage, and worshiping false gods were sins before Sinai.

Now, it is true that, before Sinai, humans had only a limited idea about God. But humans knew enough about God to be held guilty for wrongdoing. God is fair. He is not going to punish anyone without a cause. Humans had not sinned against a law that clearly had been made known. But they sinned anyway. So then, how could humans sin if they did not know about the law? They sinned because nature showed them clear pictures of God. But humans turned away from these truths. And so, humans sinned (Romans 1:20).

How does Romans 5:20, 21 help us understand why God made Himself known more fully in the “law”?

The law and teachings that God gave to Moses at Sinai included the Ten Commandments. That was the first time that this law was written down and announced far and wide.

Then the Israelites began to see that they failed to do all that the law asked. All of a sudden, they understood they were awful sinners. God’s law helped His people see their need of a Savior. And God’s law led His people to accept His gift of forgiveness.

How do the laws in your country show to you what is right and wrong? How much more does God’s everlasting law show us the difference between good and evil?



Nature had shown humans clear pictures of God. But people closed their minds to these truths. And so, these people were guilty of sin.

JESUS, THE SECOND ADAM (Romans 5:18, 19)

In Romans 5:18, 19, Paul shows us the difference between the things that both Adam and Jesus gave us. What is the difference? What hope does Jesus give us?

Humans got nothing from Adam but death. But Jesus came to this earth in a human body and passed the test that Adam failed. Jesus won the victory over sin. Jesus did this work for us as our Substitute. He put us in good standing with God. That is why Jesus is the “Second Adam.”

“The Second Adam [Jesus] was free to choose between right and wrong. God made Jesus answer for what happened because of His choices. There were people and powers all around Jesus that could have led Him to do the wrong thing. So, Jesus had a much more difficult time than Adam did in choosing not to sin. But Jesus refused to give into any desire to sin. He stayed innocent and free from guilt and sin.”
—Ellen G. White Comments [Thoughts], *The SDA Bible Commentary [Explanation]*, volume 6, page 1074, adapted.



Our being made right with God is a gift. And because it is a gift, we must reach out to God to accept this gift by faith.

Read Romans 5:15–19. As explained in these verses, how is Jesus’ gift shown to be different from Adam’s sin?

Paul shows us that Jesus’ gift is very different from Adam’s sin. Here are some examples: (1) Adam’s sin brought us death. But Jesus’ gift gave us life. (2) Adam disobeyed and brought sin into our lives. But Jesus’ obedience saved us. (3) Adam’s guilt brought a death sentence on the whole earth. But Jesus’ gift made us right with God. (4) Adam’s sin brought the damage of sin on us all. But Jesus’ gift brought us mercy and power over sin. Jesus fixed all that Adam did wrong!

Paul uses the word “gift” five times in Romans 5:15–17 to make his idea clear: Paul wants to show that we do *not* earn the gift of being made right with God. Instead, God gives us this gift. This gift is not a reward for anything we do. We are not worthy of it. Again, it is a gift. Because our being saved is a gift, we must reach out in faith to God to accept this gift.

What is the best gift that someone ever gave you? How did the fact that you did not earn it make it special? Why can no gift we could get on this earth ever begin to match the gift that Jesus gave us?

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “Many people are fooled because they believe the best about their evil hearts. But these people do not understand their natural hearts are very dishonest. Instead, these people ‘cover’ themselves in their own good works in the same way someone puts on clothes. These people are happy with living this example of what they think being good means.”—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, page 320, adapted.

“There is a big need for Jesus to be preached as our only hope and our only way to be saved. That is why God gave us the teaching of justification [being made right with God] by faith. This teaching was to many people the same as water is to the thirsty traveler. Jesus’ power is not a reward for anything we do! Instead, God gives us Jesus’ power as a gift. What a precious thought!”—*Selected Messages*, book 1, page 360, adapted.

“ ‘But Adam was like [about the same as] the One [Jesus] Who was to come’ (Romans 5:14, NLV). How exactly is Adam the same as Jesus? After all, Adam ate the forbidden fruit. And this sin made Adam the cause of death for his children and all those born on this earth. But just as Adam became the cause of death for all people, Jesus became the cause of life for everyone who believes. We have done nothing to earn Jesus’ mercy. But Jesus is the Giver of mercy to everyone who accepts Him. His power to make all men right with God comes from the Cross. The symbol of Adam’s sin is in us. We die just as if we ate the forbidden fruit ourselves. The symbol of Jesus’ life is in us, too. We live just as if we had obeyed all that the law asked of us exactly as Jesus obeyed.”—Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, pages 96, 97, adapted.



“The symbol of Adam’s sin is in us. For we die just as if we ate the forbidden fruit ourselves.”—Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, pages 96, 97, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

① “We need to study the Bible more carefully. The Bible is God’s Word to us. We should give the books of Daniel and Revelation our careful attention as we never have before. We might say less about the power of the Roman church. But we should point people to truths that the Bible writers wrote.”—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism [Preaching the Good News to People Everywhere]*, page 577, adapted. What do these words from Ellen G. White mean?

② How can we help other people to understand better the gifts that Jesus offers them?