

WHO MAY FALL FROM GRACE

ONE WHO is down cannot fall. Originally Father Adam was up; that is to say, he was perfect, created in God's likeness, free from sin. He was in God's favor, and while in that condition, he was on trial for life or death. He sinned and fell from favor into disfavor – condemnation, death. His posterity, the whole human race, have been born in God's disfavor. They are fallen. As we read, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa. 51:5.) By nature mankind are all children of wrath. They cannot fall any further down; for as it is written, "The whole world lieth in the Evil One." – I John 5:19. – Diaglott.

But something occurred which has raised a portion of the race of mankind from the fallen condition. Christ came into the world, gave His life a Ransom-price, and ascended into heaven "to appear in the presence of God." (Heb. 9:24.) Thus far, however, He has appeared only for *us*, not for *the world*, but for all those who have trusted in the precious blood of Christ. His appearance for these enables them to approach God, to become disciples of Christ and to receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

This is the attitude in which we stand: we have accepted the Redeemer, we are seeking to walk in His steps, we are lifted up out of condemnation, we are no longer dead in Adam. "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1,2.) Once we were strangers and foreigners, but having been "made nigh by the blood of Christ" we are now members of the Body of Christ. (Eph. 2:12,13.) So, then, we are children of God by adoption.

After Adam had fallen, he was regarded as an enemy of God. But we have come near to God *through Christ*. We are "accepted in the Beloved," accounted worthy of life everlasting, if we are faithful; for eternal life is the gift of God. (Eph. 1:6; Rom. 6:23.) The Church, then,

have *come back* from the fallen state; but the world *remains in that condition* and, therefore, *cannot fall*. The only ones who can do so are those who are the recipients of the Holy Spirit.

The manner of life here during the present existence may indeed affect the opportunity and future destiny of the world. If they knowingly violate obligations, they sin against light and they injure their characters; but they cannot sin away their share of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, for they have not yet received that share. Only the consecrated children of God are in the position to do so; as the Apostle points out, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance." – Heb. 6:4-6.

This thought will well bear repetition: The only class that can fall away are those who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit; but if any of those who have been brought into full harmony with God, through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, neglect or misuse their blessed privilege, there remains for them no more an interest in the great Atonement; *because they have received their portion* in Christ's redemptive work.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

The only evidence there is at the present time that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit is the fact that we have "received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15.) The world, having had no life in them, cannot lose what they never possessed. But as for us, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden the Son of

God under foot and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" – Heb. 10:26-29.

Only those who have been sanctified through the blood of the Covenant can do despite to it. Only those who have a knowledge of the Son of God can "trample Him under foot." The world in its ignorance cannot do these [R5093 : page 279] things. So, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth" (not if *the world* sin wilfully, but if *we* sin wilfully), there remaineth no longer a share for *us* in the sacrifice of Christ.

For the others, there would still remain their share in the sacrifice of Christ, and their responsibility will be in proportion to their knowledge. We have large responsibility, because we have large knowledge. We have tasted of the Holy Spirit, we have been made partakers of it. The Apostle says that "those who despised Moses' Law died without mercy." There was nothing more for them then. They did not get eternal torment for disobedience to Moses, but theirs was the death penalty. Those who thus died will, nevertheless, have their share in the redemptive work of Christ.

Those who died under the Law will eventually have an opportunity to receive God's grace in Christ Jesus. But if *they* were cut off from life under the *typical* penalty of death, how much more severe would the penalty be upon those who have the understanding and enlightenment through the antitypical Moses – Christ! The intimation of the Scriptures is that such will die the Second Death for wilful disobedience. For such there is no hope of recovery whatever. Let this solemn thought be made emphatic. There will be a recovery from the death by Moses' Law. But for those who die the Second Death, there will be nothing further. They have had their share in the Atonement. They have counted the blood of the Covenant with which they were sealed an unholy thing. "*Christ...dieth no more!*" – Rom. 6:9.

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