

# THE LORD’S DAY WORSHIP

ELEVEN O’CLOCK

September 8, 2019

We gather today as “the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant ... ” Hebrews 12:23-24a

## A Time for Preparation

### *Silent Prayer of Preparation for Worship*

SEARCHER OF HEARTS,

It is a good day to me when you give me a glimpse of myself. Sin is my greatest evil, but you are my greatest good. I have cause to loathe myself and not to seek self-honor, for no one desires to commend his own dunghill. My country, family, church fare worse because of my sins, for sinners bring judgment in thinking sins are small, or that God is not angry with them. Let me not take other good men as my example, and think I am good because I am like them. For all good men are not so good as you desire, are not always consistent, do not always follow holiness, do not feel eternal good in sore affliction. Show me how to know when a thing is evil which I think is right and good, how to know when what is lawful comes from an evil principle, such as desire for reputation or wealth by usury. Give me grace to recall my needs, my lack of knowing your will in Scripture, of wisdom to guide others, of daily repentance, want of which keeps you at bay, of the spirit of prayer, having words without love, of zeal for your glory, seeking my own ends, of joy in you and your will, of love to others. And let me not lay my pipe too short of the fountain, never touching the eternal spring, never drawing down water from above. (The Valley of Vision Prayer Book)

**Ringling of Bell** ..... Judah, Felicity & Ezra Gosnell

**Announcements**..... Deacon

## A Time for Praise:

### *Prelude*

### *Call to Worship*

Scripture and Prayer ..... Worship Leader

- **Hymn of Praise** ..... *All Creatures of Our God and King* ..... Hymn #63

## A Time for Offering:

- **Offertory Hymn** ..... *This Is My Father’s World* ..... Hymn #143

Offertory Prayer

Tithes and Offerings ..... Ushers

## A Time for Hearing God’s Word:

**Choral Message** ..... *Glory* ..... Arr. Kirkland

Message ..... Pastor Lucas Mann

Pastoral Prayer

## A Time for Surrender:

- **Closing Hymn** ..... *Revive Us, Again* ..... Hymn #434

- **Benediction**

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!” (2 Corinthians 13:14)

### *The London Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689*

## Chapter 6: Of the Fall of Man, Of Sin, and Of the Punishment Thereof

**Paragraph 1.** Although God created man upright and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, and threatened death upon the breach thereof, yet he did not long abide in this honor; Satan using the subtlety of the serpent to subdue Eve, then by her seducing Adam, who, without any compulsion, did willfully transgress the law of their creation, and the command given unto them, in eating the forbidden fruit, which God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.

## Opportunities of the Week

### **Sunday, September 8**

6:00 p.m. Choir Practice  
7:00 p.m. Evening Worship  
7:00 p.m. Youth Ministry  
7:00 p.m. Children’s Ministry

### **Wednesday, September 11**

7:00 p.m. Bible Study/Budget Discussion

### **Sunday, September 8 - 15**

Week of Prayer for State Missions: PAVE THE WAY

**Church Watch this month:** Larry Powell

**Senior Adult of the Month:** Jane Askew

**We thank you for worshipping with us today. We trust that your heart has been encouraged, your spirit filled, and that you will leave here equipped for the work to which God has called you. If you would like to find out more information about Poplar Springs Baptist Church, please visit our website: [www.poplarspringsws.org](http://www.poplarspringsws.org) or call (864) 861-2196.**

# Adam’s Fall and Mine

By R. C. Sproul

Another difficult question that shrouds the doctrine of predestination is the question of how our sinful nature can be inherited from Adam. If we are born with a fallen nature, if we are born in sin, if we are born in a state of moral inability, how can God hold us responsible for our sins?

We remember that original sin does not refer to the first sin but to the result of that first sin. The Scriptures speak repeatedly of sin and death entering the world through “one man’s transgression.” As a result of Adam’s sin, all men are now sinners. The Fall was great. It had radical repercussions for the entire human race.

There have been many attempts to explain the relationship of Adam’s fall to the rest of mankind. Some of the theories presented are quite complex and imaginative. Three theories, however, have emerged from the list as the most widely accepted. The first of these I will call the Myth Theory of the Fall.

## THE MYTH THEORY OF THE FALL

The myth theory of the Fall, as the name suggests, holds that there was no factual, historical fall. Adam and Eve are not considered historical persons. They are mythological symbols drawn to explain or represent the problem of man’s corruption. The story of the Fall in the Bible is a kind of parable; it teaches a moral lesson.

According to this theory the first few chapters of Genesis are mythological. There never was an Adam; there never was an Eve. The very structure of the story suggests parable or myth because it includes such elements as a talking serpent and such obviously symbolic objects as the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The moral truth communicated by the myth is that people fall into sin. Sin is a universal problem. Everyone commits sin; no one is perfect. The myth points to a higher reality: Everyone is his own Adam. Every person has his own private fall. Sin is a universal human condition precisely because every person succumbs to his own private temptation.

The attractive elements of this theory are important. In the first place, this view absolves God entirely of any responsibility for holding future generations of people responsible for what one couple did. Here, no one can blame their parents or their Creator for their own sin. In this scheme, my fallenness is a direct result of my own fall, not of someone else’s.

A second advantage of this view is that it escapes all need to defend the historical character of the beginning chapters of the Bible. This view suffers no anxiety from certain theories of evolution or from scientific disputes about the nature of creation. The factual truth of a myth never needs to be defended. The disadvantages of this view, however, are more serious. Its most crucial failing is that it actually offers nothing by way of explanation for the universality of sin. If each one of us is born without a sinful nature, how account for the universality of sin? If four billion people were born with no inclination to sin, with no corruption to their nature, we would reasonably expect that at least some of them would refrain from falling. If our natural moral state is one of innocent neutrality, we would statistically expect that half of the human race would remain perfect. I grant that to’ account for one innocent person’s fall presents an enormous intellectual problem. But when we compound that difficulty by the billions of people who have fallen, the problem becomes several billion times more difficult. We also grant that if one person created in the image of God could fall, then it is indeed possible that billions can likewise fall. It is the statistical probability here that is so astonishing. When we think of one person falling, that is one thing. But if

everybody does it, without exception, then we begin to wonder why. We begin to wonder if man's natural state is all that neutral.

The standard reply of the advocates of the myth view is that people are not universally born in an idyllic environment like Eden. Society is corrupt. We are born into a corrupt environment. We are like Rousseau's "innocent savage" who is corrupted by the negative influences of civilization.

This explanation begs the question. How did society or civilization get corrupt in the first place? If everyone is born innocent, without a trace of personal corruption, we would expect to find societies that are no more than half corrupt. If birds of a feather flock together, we might find societies where all the corrupt people band together and other societies where no evil is present. Society cannot be a corrupting influence until it first becomes corrupt itself. To explain the fall of an entire society or civilization, one must face the difficulties we have already pointed out.

In another one of Jonathan Edwards's famous works, his treatise on original sin, he makes the important observation that because the sin of man is universal, even if the Bible said nothing about an original Fall of the human race, reason would demand such an explanation. Nothing screams more loudly about the fact that we are born in a state of corruption than the fact that we all sin.

Another thorny question that arises concerns the relationship of sin and death. The Bible makes it clear that death is not "natural" to man. That is, death is repeatedly said to have come into the world as a result of sin. If that is so, how do we account for the death of infants? If all men are born innocent, with no innate corruption, God would be unjust to allow as yet unfallen babies to die.

The mythological view of the Fall must also face the fact that it does radical violence to the teaching of Scripture. The view does more than merely interpret the opening chapters of the Bible as non-factual. In so doing the view sets itself in clear opposition to the New Testament view of the Fall. It would take intellectual gymnastics of the most severe sort to argue that the Apostle Paul did not teach a historical Fall. The parallels that he draws between the first Adam and the second Adam are too strong to allow this, unless we argue that in Paul's mind Jesus was also a mythological character.

We grant that the Genesis account of the Fall has some unusual literary elements in it. The presence of a tree that does not follow the pattern of normal trees follows certain images of poetry. It is proper to interpret poetry as poetry and not as historical narrative. On the other hand, there are strong elements of historical narrative literature in Genesis 3. The setting of Eden is located in chapter 2 in the midst of four riverheads, including Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel (or Tigris), and Euphrates.

We know that parables can be set in real historical settings. For example, the parable of the Good Samaritan is set in the geographical context of the road to Jericho. Therefore, the mere presence of real historical rivers does not absolutely demand that we identify this section of Genesis 'as historical narrative.

There is another element of the text, however, that is more compelling. The account of Adam and Eve contains a significant genealogy. The Romans, with their penchant for mythology may have no difficulty tracing their lineage to Romulus and Remus, but the Jews were surely more scrupulous about such matters. The Jews had a strong commitment to real history. In light of the vast difference between the Jewish view of history and the Greek view of history, it is unthinkable that Jewish people would include mythological characters in their own genealogies. In Jewish writing, the presence of genealogy indicates historical narrative. Note that the New Testament historian, Luke, includes Adam in the genealogy of Jesus.

It is much easier to account for a real tree serving as a focal point of a moral test and thereby being called a tree of the knowledge of good and evil than it is to accommodate genealogy to a parable or a myth. This of course could be done if other factors demanded it. But no such factors exist. There is no sound reason why we should not interpret Genesis 3 as historical narrative and multiple reasons why we should not treat it as parable or myth. To treat it as history is to treat it as the Jews did, including Paul and Jesus. To treat it otherwise is usually motivated by some contemporary agenda that has nothing to do with Jewish history.

### THE REALIST VIEW OF THE FALL

Remember the famous television series from the 1950s called "You Are There"? It took viewers, through the magic of television, to famous historical scenes. But in fact, no electronic device has yet been invented to transport us back in time, H. G. Wells notwithstanding. We live in the present. Our only access to the past is through books, artifacts of archaeology, and the memories of ourselves and of others.

I remember teaching a course on the Bible that involved a brief study of Roman soldiers. I mentioned the Roman standard that carried the initials SPQR. I asked if anyone knew what those letters stood for. A dear friend who was in his seventies piped up, "*Senatus Populus Que Romanus*, 'The senate and the people of Rome.'" I smiled at my friend and said, "You are the only person in this room old enough to remember!"

None of us is old enough to carry memory images of the fall of Adam. Or are we? The realist view of the Fall contends that we are all old enough to remember the Fall. We should be able to remember it because we were really there.

Realism is not an exercise in a Bridey-Murphy kind of reincarnation. Rather, realism is a serious attempt to answer the problem of the Fall. The key concept is this: We cannot morally be held accountable for a sin committed by someone else. To be accountable we must have been actively involved somehow in the sin itself. Somehow, we must have been present at the Fall. *Really* present. Hence the name *Realism*.

The realist view of the Fall demands some kind of concept of the preexistence of the human soul. That is, before we were born, our souls must have already existed. They were present with Adam at the Fall. They fell along with Adam. Adam's sin was not merely an act for us; it was an act *with* us. We were there.

(To Be Continued)

### Church Contact Information:

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**Hours:** Wednesday and Thursday, 8-4

**Email:** balentine@poplarspringsws.org

**Pastor:** Lucas Mann  
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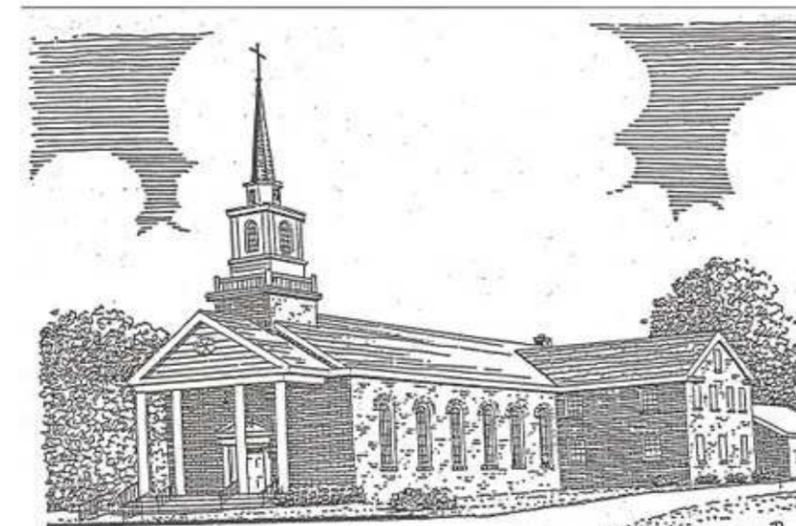
**Youth Pastor:** Travis Gosnell

**Music Leader:** Deck Balentine

**Pianist:** Jean Powell

**Website:** www.poplarspringsws.org

# Poplar Springs Baptist Church



Poplar Springs Baptist Church

Ware Shoals, S. C.

***“Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’””***

**Genesis 3:1-3**

## THE LORD'S DAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2019

**6000 Poplar Springs Road  
Ware Shoals, SC 29692  
(864) 861-2196**

**www.poplarspringsws.org**

**Pastor Lucas Mann**

**Sunday School: 10:00 am**

**Worship: 11:00 am**