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1. Understanding the Fall.

1.1. Humanity fell from its original position of stewardship over creation through its disobedience to God.

- “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Genesis 1:16-28).
- “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels [lit., *Elohim*, God] and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet...” (Psalms 8:3-6).

- When Adam fell, his grant of authority thus passed to Satan. Satan had become the “ruler of this world” (John 14:30) and the “god of this age” (2 Cor. 4:4).
- “Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours’” (Luke 4:5-7).
- Man was now in bondage to sin and death, and in servitude to Satan.

1.2. God obtained the ultimate victory over Satan and made a way for Man to return to Him through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’” (Matt. 28:18).
- “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death” (Rev. 1:18).
- “Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:15).
- “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil...” (Hebrews 2:14).

God has not yet chosen to fully exercise His dominion, but He will soon do so:

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.” (Rev. 11:15-18)

We who receive salvation have already escaped the bondage of the enemy: “...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love...” (Colossians 1:12-13).

1.3. Man is now engaged in conflict with the forces of Satan — when he is attacked by them, or when he exercises the authority of Christ to undo Satan’s works.

- “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11).

- “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7).
- “Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed” (Acts 5:16).
- “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8:5-8).

2. The victory of God in every realm.

2.1. The Victory of God in the Cross was foreordained from eternity.

The death and resurrection of Christ was a strategy in the mind of God that was meant to deal with several problems in Creation simultaneously. God had a plan “to sum up all things in Christ” (see Colossians 1:15-18). The Bible calls Jesus “... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8b).

2.2. The dreadful effects of the Fall.

Sin, spiritual death, and separation from God: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 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 surely die’” (Gen. 2:16-17).

Sin was transmitted to all people by virtue of their relationship to Adam. Paul says, "...by the one man's offense death reigned through the one..." (Rom. 5:17).

Second, death entered into Creation. Now Man was mortal: "...through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin..." (Rom. 5:12). The final outworking of that process was Man's condemnation to Hell.

Third, Man entered a state of servitude to Satan. "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey...?" (Romans 6:16); "And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish'" (Luke 4:6-7).

2.3. The hopelessness of Man's situation.

In this life *delegated authorities* have the power to bind those who are lesser in authority. The hopelessness, then, of Man's predicament is clear. Man gave away his authority to another by disobedience to God. How can Man regain what he has lost?

To save Man, God would have to address multiple serious problems all at the same time, while remaining perfectly just.

1. Destroy Satan's authority to rule over Man.
2. Deal with the penalty for the sins that have been committed.
3. Break the power of sin.
4. Destroy death.
5. Place Man in a right relationship with God once again.

2.4. God's Solution: The Incarnation.

Christ would be the “seed of the woman,” insulating Him from humanity’s sinfulness: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15).

Christ also walked without ever falling into sin. Talking about Satan, Jesus said, “...he has nothing in Me” (John 14:30).

For anyone who would receive Him, Christ would become a new head of the human race in place of Adam, a Second Adam. “And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45).

Jesus’ death would provide a way for God to destroy death itself in Jesus as He took death’s power away from Satan:

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation [a sin-offering] for the sins of the people. (Heb. 2:14-17)

2.5. What happened at the Cross.

The Bible says God put Christ forward as a *propitiation* or sin-offering, satisfying God's just wrath against sin (1 John 2:1-2).

"...it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief" (Isaiah 53:10a).

"...I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18b).

Satan's authority was undone, although scholars debate the manner of this destruction. In any case it does not appear that Satan completely understood what would result from Christ's sacrifice: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:7-8).

"And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us..." (Heb. 9:22-24).

2.6. Summarizing the benefits of the Cross to Man.

- Our sins are remitted (sent away, not merely covered).
- We have received a new nature and have been adopted by God.
- The power of sin itself is broken.
- We have been made the righteousness of God in Christ!

2.7. The Elevation of Christ.

The resurrection proved that the plan of salvation **worked**. Christ was raised to sit at the Father's right hand:

For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"? But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire." But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail." But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? (Heb. 1:5-13)

“And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:8-11).

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’” (Matt. 28:18).

3. The Authority of Christ in His Church.

3.1. Jesus viewed His mission as one of bringing the Kingdom of God into the earth.

He came as a “Divine Invader,” doing more than forgiving our sins! His Spirit-anointed acts were “signs of the Kingdom” – proofs that in Him the Kingdom had come.

“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel’” (Mark 1:14-15).

“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt. 12:28); “He sent them to preach [to announce or proclaim] the kingdom of God and to heal the sick” (Luke 9:2); “And heal the sick there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you’” (Luke 10:9); “For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power” (1 Corinthians 4:20).”

3.2. Jesus has given His Name and authority to the Church to enable the Church to act as His agent in the ongoing expansion of His Kingdom in this world.

Jesus has given His authority to the Church, but this authority is linked to the continued proclamation of the Kingdom.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [“ethne” = ethnic groups], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen” (Matt. 28:19-20).

This includes authority over demons:

“ ‘And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.’ So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen” (Mark 16:17-20).

3.3. The full proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus had every confidence that the gates of Hell would not prevail against the Church: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14).

The Church will be succeed in proclaiming Christ:

“And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’” (Rev. 6:15-17).

Christ’s power and authority are seen in His people:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father” (John 14:12).

What is our mission? Jesus said this to Paul, but it applies to the whole Church:

“...to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18).

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