

# Ambrose on Original Sin

Ambrose wrote in Second Defense of David 12.71:

“For surely we all have sinned in the first man, and through the succession of nature there is also a succession of guilt transmitted from one to all. Against whom, then, have I sinned: against the Father or against the Son? Indeed, against the one who entrusted to me that very command that I violated in not observing it. It was commanded to man that he might taste from all that was in paradise but that he not touch the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Thus Adam is in each of us. For in him the human condition sinned, because sin passed through one to all.”

In epistle 41, he wrote:

“7. And let no one be startled at the word creditor. Luke 7:41 We were before under a hard creditor, who was not to be satisfied and paid to the full but by the death of the debtor. The Lord Jesus came, He saw us bound by a heavy debt. No one could pay his debt with the patrimony of his innocence. I could have nothing of my own wherewith to free myself. He gave to me a new kind of acquittance, changing my creditor because I had nothing wherewith to pay my debt. But it was sin, not nature, which had made us debtors, for we had contracted heavy debts by our sins, that we who had been free should be bound, for he is a debtor who received any of his creditor's money. Now sin is of the devil; that wicked one has, as it were, these riches in his possession. For as the riches of Christ are virtues, so crimes are the wealth of the devil. He had reduced the human race to perpetual captivity by the heavy debt of inherited liability, which our debt-laden ancestor had transmitted to his posterity by inheritance. The Lord Jesus came, He offered His death for the death of all, He poured out His Blood for the blood of all.”

And also these...

Luke 1.36 commentary:

“whereby the children who have been baptized are transformed from ill will to the origin of their nature.”

Luke 7.143 commentary:

“Hence, it is reported that sin of body and soul originated in our ancestors.”

Luke 7.234 commentary:

“Yet, it is also possible to understand here, the likeness of the human race in one man. Adam was, and we were all in him. Adam was lost, and in him all were lost. Man is refashioned in the man who was lost, and he is made in the likeness of God and restored to His image through Divine patience and magnanimity.”

On Abraham 2.81:

“No age should be devoid of tutelage, because none is devoid of guilt. Even a baby is to be called back from sin, lest he be stained by the infection of idolatry, and lest he become accustomed to worship an idol and fondly kiss an image, to disobey his father’s will, to offend against piety. At the same time, lest anyone be haughty, in that he seems to himself to be righteous, Abraham is ordered to be circumcised. Therefore, neither an old proselyte nor a home-born baby, because every age is subject to sin, and therefore every age is fit to receive the Sacrament.”

On Abraham 2.84:

“Unless a man be born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Surely, He exempts none, not the infant, not one hindered by any necessity: but although they may have a hidden immunity to punishments, I know not whether they have the honour of the Kingdom.”

On Repentance 1.4:

“4. What can show more pride than this, since the Scripture says: ‘No one is free from sin, not even an infant of a day old;’ and David cries out: ‘Cleanse me from my sin.’ Are they more holy than David, of whose family Christ vouchsafed to be born in the mystery of the Incarnation, whose descendant is that heavenly Hall which received the world’s Redeemer in her virgin womb?”

On Repentance 1.13:

“13. For He was not begotten, as is every man, by intercourse between male and female, but born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin; He received a stainless body, which not only no sins polluted, but which neither the generation nor the conception had been stained by any admixture of defilement. For we men are all born under sin, and our very origin is in evil, as we read in the words of David: ‘For lo, I was conceived in wickedness, and in sin did my mother bring me forth.’ Therefore the flesh of Paul was a body of death, as he himself says: “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:24 But the flesh of Christ condemned sin, which He felt not at His birth, and crucified by His death, so that in our flesh there might be justification through grace, in which before there had been pollution by guilt.”

On the Death of Satyrus 2.6:

“In Adam I fell, in Adam I was cast out of Paradise, in Adam I died; how shall the Lord call me back, except He find me in Adam; guilty as I was in him, so now justified in Christ. If, then, death be the debt of all, we must be able to endure the payment. But this topic must be reserved for later treatment.”