

## 1: the antithesis – Old Life

*Based on one of the greatest living theologians, Wolfhart Pannenberg, this book is the first comprehensive study of 'human destiny'. Mapping out the movement of humanity over the course of its history to its common destiny from creation through sin and ethics to eschatology, the book also examines the extent to which scholars such as Herder have influenced Pannenberg's work in this important.*

Violence is the hatred of other people. His judgment is always based on an exhaustive knowledge of the facts of the case. Take note of this fundamental fact of biblical revelation. Noah is a saint, a righteous man and blameless; he was so described verse 9. The rest of mankind was wicked in thought and life. The difference between them was in this way the difference between white and black. How some sinners can be described as righteous while other sinners are corrupt and evil is something the rest of the Bible will explain and every Christian must learn. But take the point. The Lord takes this good man into his confidence and tells him of his plans and the reasons for them. In the Mesopotamian flood epics the gods keep their plans to themselves and the emphasis falls on the hero who has to respond to the catastrophe with his own wisdom and exploits. The point is that what God decided to destroy, had virtually destroyed itself already. In fact, through its corruption, society sets in motion the process of inevitable self-destruction. We are witnessing the same thing today! Nothing is said of its having a rudder, sail, or any other means of navigation. No one knows for sure what kind of wood this was, though cypress was widely used in ancient ship-building because of its resistance to rot. The narrator tells us nothing about its shape, whether, for example, it looked at all like a ship. It is supposed to have had a flat bottom rather than a keel. There is truth to the quip: We have said repeatedly in our study of the early chapters of Genesis that we are here being taught the most basic and fundamental principles of human life, of human history, and of salvation. The foundation for the rest of the Bible and of a true understanding of reality is being laid. And this is as true of the narrative of the flood as it is of everything else we have read so far. We have learned already of the corrupting nature of human sin, of its alienating and violent tendencies, and here again we learn, as we had already in chapter 3, of the fact and the ferocity of divine judgment against human beings for their sin. These are, of course, realities that will receive ample elaboration in the rest of the Bible and be confirmed times without end throughout human history. Indeed the reality of divine judgment for sin becomes the great presupposition of the unfolding story of salvation told in the remaining books of the Bible. Our sin pays a terrible wage unless we are redeemed from its guilt and delivered from its power. On a number of occasions, as you remember, the flood is used in the Bible as the supreme illustration of the reality of divine judgment. But we have also seen that this history reveals and illustrates the faithfulness of God to his promises. Immediately after the fall God promised a descendant of Eve would crush the head of the serpent. The entire account of Noah and his preservation and that of his family is the first of many demonstrations in Holy Scripture of the lengths that God will go to remain faithful to that promise of salvation. The Exodus will be another such demonstration, and the cross, of course, is the greatest of them all. God promised salvation through a human deliverer and he kept his word: Here at the flood for the first time we have God preserving the seed of the woman and so his promise of that promised offspring who would bring deliverance to mankind. These fundamental themes of divine judgment and divine faithfulness to the promise of redemption are fundamental to the narrative of the flood, and in this way this narrative is completely unlike the other flood stories of the ancient world. But when we have considered these subjects we are still not done with the fundamental perspectives that are being disclosed for the first time in this history of the catastrophe that God brought upon mankind so early in its history. Even judgment and salvation do not exhaust the meaning of the history of the flood! Considering the genealogy of Cain in the second half of chapter 4 and then the genealogy of Adam through Seth in chapter 5 you might have come away with the impression that these two peoples, these two communities lived apart from one another. But it was not so. Saints and sinners jostle together on the earth no matter that a chasm separates them that is so wide and so deep that on one side is death and separation from God and on the other God and his everlasting love. Men and women who believe live in one sense cheek to jowl with unbelievers, but in another far more

important sense they live, as Augustine put it in two completely different cities or societies or communities, each with a radically different destiny. Here is the great fact but also the great challenge of believing life in the world. What made Noah so godly and so righteous? We live in the same world with those whom God will judge and reject. We may, and rightly, abhor their behavior in many particulars, though we must abhor so much of our own behavior at the same time, but we live in so many ways a life that is indistinguishable from theirs. We wear the same clothes, we eat the same food, we work the same sort of jobs, we keep much the same schedule, we marry and have children, we may even indulge in some of the same entertainments. And yet for so many who look and talk and behave in many ways like those who believe in and walk with God a catastrophic punishment awaits, as all unbeknownst to them the flood was about to descend upon this generation of the human race. While at the same time salvation is prepared for those who walk with God. True enough, the difference between the righteous and the wicked can be more or less obvious. But medieval Europe was almost unbelievably violent. Murders were commonplace – not least because they were almost never punished – mass murder hardly uncommon. Sexual misbehavior was accepted virtually without comment or complaint. One manual of manners instructed people not to break wind while sitting at the table, not to spit on the floor, not to pick their noses, not to look for lice in their hair, and men were not to fondle the breasts of the women sitting next to them at table. And this of men and women made in the image of God! There are many places in the world where it is just as bad today, or where it is just as bad for other reasons, and our own culture is headed the same way, with only a thin veneer of respectability blinding us to that fact! How must all this bestiality appear to a holy God. There are two populations rubbing shoulders in this world and, so far as it really matters, only two. The world may divide us up into many groups and think the differences of great importance, but the Bible always and everywhere divides the human race in two, only in two! That is what makes the narrative of the flood so instructive. Some are destroyed in the judgment that God sent; some are delivered from it. And thus nothing else can be as remotely important in human life as the question: What will God do with me? And throughout the Bible that question is pressed home to the conscience, that question above all others: And the question must be pressed precisely because judgment looms. It matters not what you think about yourself; what matters is what God thinks. The race is divided in two, so the pressing question facing every human life is: But facing that question, as the rest of the Bible relentlessly reminds us, is difficult to do precisely because there is so much that unites believers to unbelievers. Indeed, the Scripture makes a point of telling us that he was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time. With his simple summary in v. He was a good man and like all truly good men, he was a man who loved others and was loved by others. You still find that to be true today. The best human beings have many friends. He was a man of tender affections and deep feeling, a man, no doubt, with many friends. Many of those who loved him and whom he loved, he left behind when he entered the ark. His own brothers and sisters, perhaps. His cousins, his nieces and nephews, aunts and uncles. His neighbors; perhaps those who had worked for him over the course of his life. He was ordered to shut the door against all those people when he entered the ark. But, what is almost more certain is that they had long since shut the door against him. It is not said in so many words, but these were human beings with a human nature, disposed to disdain, to look down on other human beings. How else could the world be as violent as it was? That same human nature is with us today. We recognize it, we are familiar with it. It is hardly difficult for us to imagine what life was like for Noah during the years it took to build the ark. Look at that crazy fellow now; a real Chicken Little with his endless talk about how the sky is about to fall! How they must have laughed at him. And what is more, imagine how it was at the last. We will read in 7: Noah was just the first. So it is with all believers whose lives are reported in Scripture as an example for us. Abraham, because he was a man of faith and a friend of God, had to be a pilgrim in this world, a stranger, an alien. True Christians must be pilgrims, looking for a home elsewhere. How, they ask, can it have been right for him to have left his wife and his children to go on that journey to the Celestial City? How can it have been right for him to leave his wife and children behind in the City of Destruction? But the wise and discerning, and even the little children among them, after a little thought realize their mistake. But it was as if he took leave of his family, because they had refused to join him in his pilgrimage and he knew that it was a trip he absolutely had to make. Why should we, of all people, be the

strangers here? Why should it seem that the wicked and the unbelieving belong and we do not? Why should we be excluded and not they? But such is what sin has done to the world. It has stood it on its head and made it, for us, a hostile environment, a place to pass through but not place to make a home.

## 2: Origin and History of the Doctrine of Original Sin

*Setting the scene -- Image of God as both fount and destiny of humanity -- Openness of humanity -- Sin as an antithesis to human destiny -- Eschatology and ethics in human destiny -- Theological anthropology: destiny centred, history focused.*

THE following are the passages of the New Testament principally relied on to prove the doctrines of universalism. The exposition here offered is commended to the consideration of the reader. The prophetic Scriptures abound in predictions of a coming period of mingled blessing and judgment upon earth, and the Old Testament closes with the statement that its advent will be heralded by the return of Elijah [3]. This was used by the Scribes to disprove the claims of Jesus to Messiahship, and in Matt. The Lord in reply expressly confirmed the prophecy, declaring that "Elias truly shall come first and restore all things. If, even then, Israel would but repent, God would send them the Messiah appointed for them, even Jesus [5] ; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, of which times God spake by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. He goes on to assert emphatically that every prophet, from Samuel onwards, foretold of those days, and he ends by connecting with these same prophecies the promise to Abraham that in his Seed all the kindreds of the earth shall be blessed. It is as clear as light, therefore, that "the times of restoration of all things" are no other than "the times of refreshing" of the 19th verse, "the great season of joy and rest on earth, which it was understood the coming of Messiah in His glory was to bring with it. It must not be overlooked that "the times of restoration of all things" will be marked by the destruction of the obdurate and disobedient. The words can be read in two ways. Either "death" may be taken to mean no more than physical death, and "life" as implying only the resurrection; or else the words may be understood in their deeper spiritual significance. But who disputes this? It is the common faith of Christendom! Then "death" must be construed on the same principle, for the words are correlatives. How then shall we read the verse? As every human being dies, i. But these propositions are contradictory and absurd. We must either be content, therefore, to take the words as asserting merely the universality of death and resurrection, or else we must adopt a second possible rendering [9] , and construe them thus: As in Adam all who belong to Adam die, so in Christ all who belong to Christ shall be made alive. If the 22nd verse be bracketed with the 21st, it will be read on the first principle above suggested; if with the 23rd, it will be pregnant with higher truth. But in neither case can it have the slightest bearing on the present controversy. In the passage under consideration the climax is reached in the statement of the 28th verse that the great end of the "mediatorial kingdom" is "that God may be all in all. But this result is declared to be "when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. Moreover, the absolute and acknowledged supremacy of the Almighty is all that is involved in the words "that God may be all in all. The supremacy is universal, and if it be brought about by reconciliation, the blessing must be shared by all the hosts of darkness. But till it has been proved that this acknowledgment shall be obtained from all by reconciliation, it must not be assumed that it will not be, in the case of some, by judgment. But this perhaps has been assumed too easily. The language seems to be figurative, for it is not intelligent beings only, but all animated creation, that join in the anthem of praise. No argument can fairly be based on it. For the redeemed there is to be no more curse or death or sorrow, "but" in awful contrast with this "the fearful and unbelieving. But all that is essential here is to determine whether the meaning put upon the passage by the advocates of universalism be the true interpretation of it. The difficulty of the passage is centred in the statement of the 18th verse, that "as through one trespass [the judgment came] unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness [the free gift came] unto all men to justification of life. But surely the second of these correlative clauses is governed by the first. No one will deny that this is a fair and natural rendering of the passage; and this being so, I might pass on, leaving it to those who insist upon giving it a wider meaning to prove the correctness of their view. But let us pursue the matter further. As the condemnation included "all men," so also does the justification which tends to life. That the saved will be freed from the guilt of original sin is a mere truism. So far as regards that sin every human being is "justified. What then is the alternative? Suffice it here to admit that they are wide enough to include the universe, and if

explanatory words of as wide signification be added, no other meaning can fairly be put on them. But is it clear that the words here added are not words of limitation? In the passage already noticed in Philippians [14], where the supremacy of Christ is in question, the apostle includes, with heaven and earth, the underworld; and that "the heavens" include the abode of fallen angels and lost men is a startling assumption which cannot be conceded. Moreover, it is admitted by all that the lost will be sent to their punishment after the last great judgment. Therefore if they are to be included in the "gathering together," "the economy of the fulness of times" must be explained on a principle unknown to theologians. Further, the rendering "gather together in one" gives to the word here used a colour which scarcely belongs to it. It occurs once again—viz. The word means to head up or sum up as ex. The universe shall yet be headed up in Christ. He shall regain the place from which sin has sought to dethrone Him. But whether this shall be accomplished by the restoration of all, or by the subjection of all, we must turn to other scriptures to decide. To the Colossians St. Here at last we have a statement which, it ought to be admitted, seems to teach universal restoration. To attempt a critical analysis of the somewhat conflicting views of commentators on the passage would involve too serious a digression. But in accordance with the scheme of my argument, the following suggestions are offered for the consideration of the thoughtful. First, then, the remark already made on the words "all things" applies here with increased force. It cannot be questioned that in the 16th verse these words have no limitation whatever; for in speaking of creation, "the heavens and the earth" include the universe in every part and to its utmost limits. Further; there is sometimes a good deal of theology in the use of the Greek article, and its presence here indicates that the prominent thought in the passage is not every part of the universe, but the universe regarded as a whole. May not the lapsed portion of it be ignored here, as it is ignored in the closing words of the first chapter of the Bible, where everything [15] that God had made was declared to be very good, albeit the Serpent and his angels had already marred the unity of creation? But it is the word "reconcile" upon which attention must be centred in considering this passage. It is used only by St. Paul, and the passages in which it occurs are so few and so important that it will be well to quote them here. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death. The question at once suggests itself, On which side is the change? Does the creature receive God into his favour, or is it God Who receives the creature? The mere statement of the question seems to prejudge the answer. In a case like this there is no safer clue to the meaning of any word in the New Testament than its use in the Septuagint. Dean Alford quotes the following as the places where it occurs: In the other passage, 2 Macc. Trench goes on to say that the Christian reconciliation is, first, "a reconciliation effected once for all for us by Christ upon His cross;" though it is, "secondly and subordinately," "the daily deposition under the operation of the Holy Spirit of the enmity of the old man toward God. In all these passages from the Septuagint reconciliation is from God to man; and if with the light they give we turn back to the scriptures above set forth, this same conclusion will be established. The next passage is still more unmistakable. The setting aside of Israel was "the reconciliation of the world. Again, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. By that death we who were enemies were reconciled. The appeal of the Gospel is now that men would receive the reconciliation. It is impossible that the way of life ever can become more free than that death has made it; and if men refuse the proffered mercy, if they reject the reconciliation, what alternative can there be but wrath? It is unnecessary, therefore, to discuss the views of rival commentators upon the text, especially as, apart from controversy, no one probably would question its reference to Isaiah The one, no doubt, is bound to reconcile the words with his narrow views of redemption, and the other must account for the fact of judgment to come, consistently with universal expiation. But they who refuse to take either side in that controversy will be content to mark that while the work of Christ has a relation to the world [22], it has not brought the world deliverance from judgment. The question here involved is not the duration of future punishment, but whether future punishment is possible at all. Dean Alford refers to the following passages where it is used in the Septuagint - viz. It expresses not what Christ accomplished through His death on the cross, but what He is in virtue of that death. But if the grant of pardon were compulsory with God, or if it were impossible, grace would be in bondage. Because Christ is the propitiation for the whole world, God can have mercy upon whom He will; but to assert that His death renders judgment and punishment for sin unrighteous

and impossible, is a wanton denial of Scripture. And if, in fact, there be "wrath to come," the duration of that wrath may be infinite as far as this passage is concerned. Judgment and hell are facts which all admit. Whatever these verses mean, therefore, they are consistent with the perdition of the ungodly. If Christ were not a ransom for all, there would be those on earth whom God could not save. Grace, therefore, would be in chains, and not enthroned. The 4th verse, as it reads in the English, may mean either that God intends to save all men, or else that He is willing that all should be saved. There is no such ambiguity in the Greek, "The Lord is - not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But if He be in the same sense the Saviour of all, what possible meaning can there be in the words of limitation, "specially of those that believe. The only possible way in which the idea of discharge on payment could be negated would be by fixing the debt at a sum entirely beyond the power of any man to pay. And this is precisely what the Lord has done in the kindred passage, Matt. There, again, the debtor was committed "till he should pay all that was due"; but the sum due was so enormous that payment was impossible. If the 10, talents were of gold, the amount was fabulous. But even if of silver, the mention of such an amount would have impressed, and was clearly intended to impress, the hearers with the idea of hopeless ruin. It was the sum at which Haman reckoned the revenue derivable from the destruction of the entire Jewish people Esther 3: Does the context leave it doubtful which is meant?

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*Mapping out the movement of humanity over the course of its history to its common destiny from creation through sin and ethics to eschatology, the book also examines the extent to which scholars such as Herder have influenced Pannenberg's work in this important area and shows how Pannenberg's project on ethics is related to human destiny.*

Part IV of Original Sin.. Fact or Fable ended with the words.. However, one very interesting question remains. A something that has to be put right before a person can be considered once more a "son of God", eligible for the Kingdom of Heaven. That his legacy to all his descendants is a moral corruption that causes every member of the human race to be born guilty of sin long before they commit one for themselves. Several passages in Romans, particularly from the fifth chapter, are often taken as proof texts for Original Sin and the total depravity of man. That our eternal destiny is determined by our conduct, not by inheritance, and that every single person will be judged by his own actions whether they be good or bad, In Romans 5, Paul seems to be saying that something happened to all humanity because of what took place in the garden of Eden. That the entire race was affected by the sin of Adam. These statements are very intriguing, especially since they seem to fly in the face of innumerable other verses that say exactly the opposite. What then did Paul mean when he said [Emphasis Added] Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world As the name suggests, this is a field associated with the study of genes, which makes it necessary to first briefly identify what a gene is, and what it does. Each gene carries blueprints for making proteins, which are the building blocks for everything in our bodies. Collagen, which forms the structural scaffolding of skin and many other tissues, is a protein. Insulin, a hormone that regulates blood sugar, is a protein. Trypsin, an enzyme involved in digestion, is a protein. So is the pigment melanin, which gives hair and skin its color. Note that while no one gene determines whether a person has a disease or not, there is a degree of a genetic disposition towards certain illnesses. In other words a person was violent or asthmatic because they had inherited "bad genes", and there was little one could do about it since all, or at least most, patterns were firmly established during early fetal development. However fairly recent discoveries are shaking many of these concepts. While genes or the genome contain the manual for the human body, they themselves operate according to sets of instructions. Epigenetics Defining the Terms In modern molecular biology and genetics Epi is a prefix taken from the Greek that means on or above. Therefore the epigenome, which is cellular material, sits on top, or just outside of, the genome, and governs how the gene behaves. Epigenetics is the study of how environmental factors like diet, stress and maternal nutrition can change gene function without altering the underlying DNA sequence in any way which, until recently, was scientific heresy. But genes themselves need instructions for what to do, and where and when to do it. A human liver cell contains the same DNA as a brain cell, yet somehow it knows to code only those proteins needed for the functioning of the liver. Those instructions are found not in the letters of the DNA itself but on it, in an array of chemical markers and switches, known collectively as the epigenome, that lie along the length of the double helix. These epigenetic switches and markers in turn help switch on or off the expression of particular genes. For instance, a yellow mother has more pups that are yellow than mottled, whereas a mottled mother is likely to have a higher percentage of mottled pups. But the gene that determines the coat colour has an identical sequence in both the yellow and mottled mothers, so something else must be coming from the mother to influence coat colour. Whitelaw and colleagues show that an epigenetic mark located at the start of the gene is responsible; it influences the expression of the gene, which in turn determines the colour of the coat. In other words, your genes can be imprinted in a semi-permanent fashion that is transmitted to future generations. The idea that inheritance is not just about which genes you inherit, but whether these are switched on or off, is a whole new frontier in biology, and has brought us to the sudden realization that we appear to have a measure of control over our genetic legacy. In other words our free will, not fate, can determine a great deal about us, including our health. In fact, Scientists have found striking examples of epigenetic behaviour in the animal kingdomâ€”in the way, for example, honeybee larvae "decide" whether to become queens or workers depending upon their interaction with other larvae and the environment. Inheriting Epigenetic Changes The conventional view was that every

characteristic that we inherit is carried by our DNA, and nothing we do in our lifetime can be biologically passed to our children. The Effects of Nutrition Methyl groups are basic units in organic chemistry, and are entirely derived from the foods people eat. The term methylated means that a substance has at least one methyl group. Methyls enable the smooth functioning of cells. Discover Magazine calls the experiment "simplicity itself". Agouti mice are so called because they carry the agouti gene, which alters their appearance making them fat, yellow, constantly ravenous, and prone to cancer and diabetes. The offspring of these mice usually share the same unfortunate genetic legacy and are identical to their parents in every way. They are equally yellow, equally fat and equally susceptible to life-shortening diseases. How was this accomplished? Conventional wisdom would suggest that they were fed a witches brew of lab concocted chemicals. The approach of the researchers was Starting just before conception, Jirtle and Waterland fed a test group of mother mice a diet rich in methyl donors, small chemical clusters that can attach to a gene and turn it off. These molecules are common in the environment and are found in many foods, including onions, garlic, beets, and in the food supplements often given to pregnant women. In November , Marcus Pembrey, a clinical geneticist at the Institute of Child Health in London, attended a conference at Duke University to present intriguing data drawn from two centuries of records on crop yields and food prices in an isolated town in northern Sweden. While we already know that there are significant behavioral changes in children who grow up without maternal care, Michael Meaney of McGill University in Montreal "compared two types of mother rats: The licked newborns showed "decreased methylation patterns in an area of the brain that helps them handle stress" [9] and therefore grew up to be relatively brave and calm for rats. Through a simple maternal behavior, these mother rats were literally shaping the brains of their offspring. The possibility raised by epigenetics is that such cultural transmission may, after all, have a genetic component. Could it be that historical traumas, such as transatlantic slavery, leave some kind of genetic mark on the descendants of their victims? Prevention of these deficits requires early, intensive and long-term support to parents and child. Newly discovered epigenetic mechanisms suggest that intensive perinatal interventions will have impacts on numerous aspects of physical and mental health, including DB disruptive behaviour. How long these Epigenetic changes can last is a question that can not yet be answered, since the results seem to vary quite widely. In another study, roundworms fed with a particular type of bacteria exhibit loss of a green fluorescent protein and a small dumpy appearance that lasts 40 generations. In human terms, factoring for 40 years equaling one generation, would represent years of generational history". In this case where the changes came about through environmental factors, the effect only went on to the next generation with no real impact in the long term. These mice showed significant improvement in long-term potentiation LTP , a form of neural transmission that is key to memory formation. Surprisingly, their offspring also showed LTP improvement, even when the offspring got no extra attention. And, methyl tags that are knocked off can be regained via nutrients, drugs, and enriching experiences. That response can be inherited through many generations via epigenetic marks, but if you remove the environmental pressure, the epigenetic marks will eventually fade, and the DNA code will "begin to revert to its original programming. Epigenetics and Darwinism Darwinian evolution has never been demonstrated, but epigenetic changes have been repeatedly demonstrated in the laboratory. Darwin taught that " The finches on those islands are of similar size, coloration, and habits, but have different sized and shaped beaks. While Darwin never came up with a detailed theory as to how this happened, he did speculate that the different finches had descended from a common ancestor. However since then the Finches are celebrated as a classic instance of the workings of evolution through natural selection. The theory being that their beaks evolved over time to be best suited to their function.. In each locality one or more individual finch happened to acquire, by random mutation, a beak shape more suitable for the food sources in that locality. These individuals then had a competitive advantage over their fellow finches, enabling them to grow and reproduce more successfully, and pass on their more specialised beaks to successive generations - until eventually the characteristic had spread throughout the finch population in that locality. However, if the Finches were to survive at all, the changes would have had to happen rapidly, not over many generations, which is more evident of gene switching epigenetics rather than gene mutations or natural selection. Besides which, scientists may have "too easily dismissed" early naturalists

like Jan-Baptiste Lamarck who argued that evolution could occur within a generation or two. He posited that animals acquired certain traits during their lifetimes because of their environment and choices. The most famous Lamarckian example: In contrast, Darwin argued that evolution works not through the fire of effort but through cold, impartial selection. By Darwinist thinking, giraffes got their long necks over millennia because genes for long necks had, very slowly, gained advantage. The fact remains that while we have certainly made some astounding discoveries, we have probably just scratched the surface, inasmuch as the patterns of epigenetic marks in the human epigenome numbers in the millions. The Human Epigenome Project is already under way in Europe, but a full epigenome map will require "major advances in computing power" [13] In other words, there is a whole lot that we do not know. We have only recently discovered that the epigenome can change in response to diet, stress, nutrition and the environment. Also, the epigenetic changes that come about by the choices we make, or the situations we find ourselves in, during our lifetime, can be biologically passed to not only our children, but can reverberate far into the future affecting future generations. Note that all the factors that we know of that can be responsible for changes in the epigenome became issues when Adam and Eve sinned and were banished from the garden. In view of their hiding from Him [Genesis 3: The couple went from a safe and plentiful garden to the outside world, which meant that their environment changed significantly. They now had to grow their own food, which must have meant an appreciable change in their diet, and physical labor. So why would it be too much to believe that significant changes took place in their epigenome, which was then transferred to future generations. On the other hand, questions have also risen as to how much epigenetic change is transmitted through the sperm of the male.. One paper concludes that "sex-specific, male-line transgenerational responses exist in humans". The Bible also teaches that this condition is reversible. In fact Jesus goes on to call it being "born of the Spirit" John 3: Essentially, this second birth is very different from the physical birth when your mother delivered you, since this one comes about by an action of the Holy Spirit. It is a spiritual birth that, according to 2 Corinthians 5: No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. The imagery expressed here clearly refers to the male parent who fathers children [John refers to Christians in this way several times Restoring The "Son of God" Status To be particularly noted is that the Biblical term "Sons of Elohim" son of the Creator Himself, is only used of someone who is born of a specific divine act of creation. It was only after believers in the New Testament were born again of the Spirit of God, and considered to be a new creation that they are again referred to as sons of God. On two occasions Paul explicitly "refers to Christ as the imago Dei Colossians 1:

*Setting the scene --Image of God as both fount and destiny of humanity --Openness of humanity --Sin as an antithesis to human destiny --Eschatology and ethics in human destiny --Theological anthropology: destiny centred, history focused.*

Christian views on the Old Covenant and Seven deadly sins In the Old Testament , some sins were punishable by death in different forms, while most sins are forgiven by burnt offerings. Christians consider the Old Covenant to be fulfilled by the Gospel. In the New Testament the forgiveness of sin is effected through faith and repentance Mark 1: The sinful person has never before been in a favorable relationship with God. When, as a part of the process of salvation, a person is forgiven, they enter into a union with God which abides forever. It has damaged and completely severed the relationship of humanity to God. That relationship can only be restored through acceptance of Jesus Christ and his death on the cross as a satisfactory sacrifice for the sins of humanity. Humanity was destined for life with God when Adam disobeyed God. The Bible in John 3: Eve was punished by the pains of childbirth and the sorrow of bringing about life that would eventually age, sicken and die Genesis 3: Adam was punished by having to work endlessly to feed himself and his family. The land would bring forth both thistles and thorns to be cleared and herbs and grain to be planted, nurtured, and harvested. The second part of the curse about his mortality is from his origin as red clay - he is from the land and he and his descendants would return to it when buried after death. For his punishment, God banished him as a fugitive, but first marked him with a sign that would protect him and his descendants from harm Genesis 4: One concept of sin deals with things that exist on Earth, but not in Heaven. Food, for example, while a necessary good for the health of the temporal body, is not of eternal transcendental living and therefore its excessive savoring is considered a sin. Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Mortal sins cause one to lose salvation unless the sinner repents and venial sins require some sort of penance either on Earth or in Purgatory. Even inevitable sin is said to have already been cleansed. The Lamb of God was and is God himself and is therefore sinless. In the Old Testament, Leviticus The term papa cannot be taken however, in literal sense as that of a sin. This is because there is no consensus regarding the nature of ultimate reality or God in Hinduism. Only, the vedanta school being unambiguously theistic, whereas no anthropomorphic God exists in the rest five schools namely Samkhya, Nyaya Yoga, Vaishashikha, and Purva-Mimansa. To conclude, considering a lack of consensus regarding the nature of ultimate reality in Hinduism, it can be considered that papa has lesser insistence on God for it be translated as Sin, and that there is no exact equivalent to Sin in Hinduism. Islamic views on sin In Islamic ethics , Muslims see sin as anything that goes against the commands of Allah God , a breach of the laws and norms laid down by religion. A jiva a being acquires sin based on its karma , if it hurts anyone, causes someone to hurt anyone, or commends hurting anyone by thought, speech or action. Anyone, here, refers to literally any living organism, but not limited to human beings. No jiva can achieve moksha ultimate emancipation without ceasing to accumulate karma and shedding off the already accumulated karma entirely. A jiva accumulates karma if it resorts to violence, non-chastity, falsehood, stealing, and possessiveness. A jiva ceases to accumulate karma if he resorts to the golden trio of samyak gyan right knowledge , samyak darshan right sight and samyak charitra right character. A jiva begins to shed off the accumulated karma by resorting to penance, repentance, vows and by exterminating foes of lust, anger, attachment, aversion, ignorance and fallacy. If a jiva does not give up sin, his karma will keep accumulating and no sin can be absolved without getting its fruit or repenting for it. Thus such a jiva is bound to remain in the worldly cycle of constant reincarnation , wherein it will keep taking rebirths, into any of the four broad types of living organisms, depending on the magnitude and nature of karma accumulated in previous birth s. The four types are dev beings of heaven, including deities , manushya human , tiryanch plants, animals, insects, etc. During this cycle of getting born and dying for infinity, the jiva will have to then live the life of the organism he is and while living it, the jiva will again perform more karma. This will again lead to rebirth and again performing more karma. Thus, the cycle continues. It is important to note that Jains believe that for complete liberation, not only the "sinful karma" but

even the "meritorious karma" needs to be shed off. This means that a jiva can truly attain moksha, only if the soul is completely and absolutely pure and devoid of any accumulation. For instance, sins may cause the jiva to be reborn, inter alia, in hell and merits may cause it to be reborn in heaven. But heaven, like hell is a part of worldly cycle of reincarnation and not supreme moksha of the soul. Thus, if a person hypothetically keeps performing only and exclusively good deeds in his life, he may still not attain moksha, because he has not yet shed off previously accumulated sins through repentance and knowledge. Jains believe that only a human jiva has the capacity and the will to attain moksha. Hence the jiva should use this extremely rare opportunity of being born as a human to walk on the path that brings him closer to moksha. In fact, Jains take the concept of avoiding sin so seriously that not only are they completely vegetarian but some devout Jains also abstain from eating underground grown food like potatoes, onions, etc. Most of the Jains are also nonalcoholics and eat before sunset each day. Some sins are punishable with death by the court, others with death by heaven, others with lashes, and others without such punishment, but no sins with willful intent go without consequence. Unwillful violations of the mitzvot without negligence do not count as sins. When the Temple yet stood in Jerusalem, people would offer sacrifices for their misdeeds. The atoning aspect of korbanot is carefully circumscribed. For the most part, korbanot only expiate such "sins by error", that is, sins committed because a person forgot or did not know that this thing was a sin. In some circumstances, lack of knowledge is considered close to deliberate intent. No atonement is needed for violations committed under duress, and for the most part, korbanot cannot atone for a deliberate sin. In addition, korbanot have no expiating effect unless the person making the offering sincerely repents his or her actions before making the offering, and makes restitution to any person who suffered harm through the violation. The completely righteous suffer for their sins by humiliation, poverty, and suffering that God sends them in this world and receive their reward in the world to come. The in-between not completely righteous or completely wicked, suffer for and repent their sins after death and thereafter join the righteous. The very evil do not repent even at the gates of hell. Such people prosper in this world to receive their reward for any good deed, but cannot be cleansed by and hence cannot leave gehinnom, because they do not or cannot repent. This world can therefore seem unjust where the righteous suffer, while the wicked prosper. Many great thinkers have contemplated this.

### 5: Wolfhart Pannenberg on Human Destiny - CRC Press Book

*Based on one of the greatest living theologians, Wolfhart Pannenberg, this book is the first comprehensive study of 'human destiny'. Mapping out the movement of humanity over the course of its history to its common destiny from creation through sin and ethics to eschatology, the book also examines.*

The curious crime, the fine Felicity and flower of wickedness. How is the time of day a portent of coming events? Is concealment the sole reason why most murders are committed in the dark? What does it show in Banquo? Where are witches in this act? How does the analytical and imaginative mind of Macbeth show itself? Does the dagger suggest confidence or terror, temptation or retribution? How does sin in Act 2 differ from sin in Act I? What accompaniments to the murder? Has history any parallel to this? Give a similar example from Hawthorne. Show the pathos in this act. Is it art to thus relieve crime? Why does Lady Macbeth need to take wine? How does its effect show her nature? How does Lady Macbeth show her womanliness? Why does Macbeth bring away the daggers? What does the knocking at the gate personify? Where does Macbeth first show his hypocrisy? Is this natural to him? Why does he describe the dead Duncan so minutely? Which is the most far seeing, Lord or Lady Macbeth? Is this a difference of sex or character? How does the murder of the grooms contrast with the murder of Duncan? What change of character has been wrought by crime? Why does Lady Macbeth faint? What symbolism in the horses of Duncan eating each other? How does Banquo proclaim his innocence? Is he wholly innocent? How do Lord and Lady Macbeth each meet the world? How does Donald show his suspicion of the murderer? Why is the old man introduced into the last scene? How do some rank Act 2? What feeling is awakened by Act 2? In the greatness of his folly he shall go astray. All that is human must retrograde if it do not advance. Give three reasons Macbeth would have for the murder of Banquo. Does Lady Macbeth have any influence in this murder? What kind of people does Macbeth summon around him? Why does Macbeth not commit these murders with his own hand? Why do we have three murderers when only two were engaged? Give the two theories about the third murderer? Has her nature changed? What are the ghosts in scene 4? How does Lady Macbeth treat her husband in this scene? On whom has Macbeth come to depend? What is his attitude toward his wife? Why are they so seldom together? What sentence from Macbeth in Act 3 similar to one in Act I? How has its meaning changed? How do Lord and Lady Macbeth differ from each other in their relations to the world at this time? Give the reasons for this? Why are the witches seen under the rule of Hecate? Why chided by her? How have the witches changed? Why do they always appear grander in the presence of Macbeth? Is it the nature of evil to change with time? Does evil change its aspect with different people? What is the condition of the kingdom in Act 3? Who is responsible for this? Does crime simply curse the criminal? Why should Lennox be suspicious of Macbeth? What feeling influences the reader in Act 3? What changes have the witches undergone since Act I? What apparitions have taken their place and what do they each signify? What do the eight kings represent? What effect have all these on Macbeth? How do these characters differ? What moral purpose is served by these contrasting marriages? Why does Malcolm give such a false picture of himself? How does he differ from his father? Which is the stronger influence in life, an inheritance from a parent, or the example of a parent? What law of evil is illustrated in this? Give examples from history, from other dramas. What elements of character not found in Act I does Macbeth show in Acts 3 and 4? What enhances this characteristic? Does Macbeth show remorse? What is the course of destiny in this play? How do destiny and doom join in this act? What opposite qualities in Macbeth and Hamlet result in the downfall of each? How do the witches of Shakespeare differ from the oracles of the heathen world? Why is the king of England, curing diseases, by a touch, introduced? How does evil in Shakespeare differ from evil in Milton and in Dante? How is evil pictured in Goethe? How does it differ from the Greek drama? What feeling influences the reader in Act 4?

### 6: The Greek Versus the Hebrew View of Man

*Christ has won for mankind immunity from judgment for Adam's sin. So far as regards that sin every human being which is the antithesis of Human Destiny.*

This is a very complex issue, and we will start with what the Bible does not teach. Fate is usually thought of as a predetermined course of events beyond human control. Fatalism is a major premise of Islam, which demands total submission to the sovereignty of Allah. Their decisions could not be canceled or annulled, even by other gods. Again, fatalism is not a biblical concept. Fate and Destiny - Our Free Will The Bible teaches that Man was created with the ability to make moral choices and that he is responsible for those choices. On the contrary, Adam and his wife had the ability to choose obedience with its attendant blessing or disobedience with its consequent curse. They knew what the result of their decision would be, and they were held accountable Genesis 3. This theme of being held accountable for our choices continues throughout Scripture. We sin because we choose to. This is a very insightful verse. Scripture also teaches that we choose to have faith. The oft-repeated command in Scripture to believe implies that we do have a choice in the matter. Only God is sovereign. An all-wise, all-powerful God must have a plan, so it should be no surprise that the Bible speaks of a divine plan. The providence of God is working to bring about His original plan for creation. God speaks in Isaiah Fighting against the plan of God is pointless. This is why the Tower of Babel was never completed Genesis God uses even sinful men for His purposes. God worked in the hearts of the Egyptians Exodus As it is written: David also recognized that the Lord had a plan for him. Jesus obviously had a plan for Saul, and Saul had been painfully resisting it. Later, Jesus tells Saul that a man named Ananias would come to visit "and then Jesus tells Ananias verses ! Obviously, Jesus had a pre-arranged plan for Ananias as well. He could have been like Jonah and run the other way. Fortunately, Ananias obeyed verse In summary, the Bible teaches that God is in charge. At the same time, He has given us the freedom to obey or disobey Him, and there are some things that God does only in answer to prayer James 4: God blesses the obedient, and He is patient with those who disobey, even to the point of seeming laxity. He has a plan for our lives, which includes our joy and His glory both in this world and in the world to come.

### 7: Original Sin Or Epigenetics

*Breeding to feed, our destiny, unholy peace - Nauseating Nuclear tools, amassed by fools, already used - Unreduced Society vaporizing - Uncreating, reprimanding.*

Her memoir follows her experience as the daughter of the mayor of Tehran before the Islamic revolution, her education in the United States for graduate training in literature, and her return to teach in Tehran, first at the university and then privately. The book is less about politics and more about the way zealous believers read or misread literature. Hence Reading Lolita in Tehran is of use once again for Reformed Protestants who advocate w-w and Christian education. This is not meant to be a cheap shot. It is rather a way of considering parallels between totalistic claims upon knowledge and ways of understanding. One particular passage from Nafisi struck and moved me. Nafisi also uses discussions of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Henry James to explore her experience within Iran. This book preaches illicit relations between a man and a woman. First we have Tom and his mistress, the scene in her apartment, even the narrator, Nick, is implicated. He is a charlatan, he is an adulterer, he is a liar. He is the only victim. He is the genuine symbol of the oppressed, in the land of, of that Great Satan! But the truth is that he is a romantic and tragic dreamer, who become heroic because of his belief in his own romantic delusion. Gatsby cannot tolerate the shabbiness of his life. It was to the promises of that self that he remained faithful, to the green light at the end of the dock, not a shabby dream of wealth and prosperity. The dream is not about money but what he imagines he can become. It is not a comment on America as a materialistic country but as an idealistic one, one that has turned money into a means of retrieving the dream. There is nothing crass here, or the crassness is so mingled with the dream that it becomes very difficult to differentiate between the two. In the end, the best ideals and the most sordid of realities all come together. If viewed only from the standpoint of the antithesis between belief and unbelief, or between obedience to God or sinful disobedience, the political Islamic reading of Gatsby has merit. Still, the point here is not about the best reading of Fitzgerald but the limits of w-w thinking that relies so heavily on the antithesis. But it is not the last word on human beings even if it is the ultimate one. Persons are bodies as much as they are souls, and while inhabiting planet earth between the advents of Christ, people are still capable of remarkable accomplishments and aspirations. The reason is not because they are free from sin or unbelief but because they are created in the image of God and the residue of that image is responsible for those noble even if unholy longings that sent Jay Gatsby to his soggy death. If w-wers can produce that kind of intellectual agility â€” if they can recognize the doubleness of human existence and the dance among spiritual longings, human ingenuity, and the imperviousness of original sin â€” then we need to pay them more attention. If not, then they sound like just one more version of identity politics to be shelved near the section with political Islamists who also rely overwhelmingly on the antithesis.

### 8: Acts the modern pagan and pantheist antithesis of the Word of God

*The passages quoted by Calvin indicate that the human soul survives physical death, not that it is in itself immortal. The notion of the inherent immortality of the soul, it is true, has been generally accepted in the Christian church, and this is certainly a factor to be taken into account.*

Study to show thyself approved. Hughes raises a series of questions concerning the traditional idea of "everlasting death. Hughes, *The True Image*: Eerdmans, , pp. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher. Reviews - Philip E. Pinnock, McMaster Divinity College "In this wide-ranging biblical, historical, and theological study a versatile veteran makes convincing use of the concept of the divine image to integrate the doctrines of man and Christ. This is a very valuable piece of work. Packer, Regent College "We have come to expect both solid learning and exquisite literary style from Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. Indeed it is a remarkable piece of work, quarried from a lifetime of study in biblical exegesis, systematic theology, and church history. It is encyclopedic in its discussion of anthropology and Christology and their mutual relationship. The novice will find it instructive, while the theologically advanced will discover comprehensive exposition married to a scholarly judgment that sometimes resurrects classical views, sometimes provides the unexpected, and on occasion surprises with the controversial. The passages quoted by Calvin indicate that the human soul survives physical death, not that it is in itself immortal. The notion of the inherent immortality of the soul, it is true, has been generally accepted in the Christian church, and this is certainly a factor to be taken into account. But this suggests an innate awareness that death is not the end of the story, indeed that man is answerable to God who is the source of his life, rather than a proof of personal or collective immortality. Another argument which has been advanced is that by reason of his creation in the image of God man must participate in the excellencies that are attributed to God of which everlasting existence is not the least; and this has been said therefore to require the postulation of human immortality. The immortality of man or of the human soul is not then a necessary conclusion from this premise. It has also commonly been argued either a priori that the immortality of the soul demands the everlasting punishment of the wicked as well as the everlasting blessedness of the redeemed, or a posteriori that the endless punishment of the wicked as well as the endless blessedness of the redeemed demands the immortality of the soul. What may be deduced from the Biblical revelation? First of all, that man as originally created was both potentially immortal and potentially mortal. In close association with this is his having been created potentially sinless, but also potentially sinful. The possibility of his sinning involved the possibility of his dying, just as the possibility of his not sinning involved the possibility of his not dying. As we have remarked earlier, this does not mean that man was originally created in a state of neutrality between righteousness and sinfulness and between living and dying; for, on the contrary, his creation in the divine image, which is the bond of his personal fellowship with his Maker, placed his existence quite positively within the sphere of godliness and life. His loving and grateful concurrence with the will of God, who is the source of his life and blessedness, would have ensured the continuation of his existence in unclouded blessing as he conformed himself to that image in which he is constituted. It was by his rebellion against his Creator that he passed from a positive to a negative relationship and brought the curse upon himself. His death, which is the sum of that curse, is also the evidence that man is not inherently immortal. To contend that only the human soul is innately immortal is to maintain a position which is nowhere approved in the teaching of Scripture, for in the biblical purview human nature is always seen as integrally compounded of both the spiritual and the bodily. If this were not so, the whole doctrine of the incarnation and of the death and resurrection of the Son would be despoiled of meaning and reality. Man is essentially a corporeal-spiritual entity. The immortality, accordingly, of which the Christian is assured is not inherent in himself or in his soul but is bestowed by God and is the immortality of the whole person in the fullness of his humanity, bodily as well as spiritual. This immortality, unearned by us, has been gained for us by the incarnate Son who, by partaking of our human nature in its fullness, both bodily and spiritual, and by dying our death, nullified the power of the devil and removed from us the fear and the sting of death Heb. Our new life in Christ, which includes our ultimate resurrection to life and immortality, is owed entirely to God and his grace. Look at 1

Timothy 6: To him be honor and eternal dominion. The immortality which was potentially ours at creation and was forfeited in the fall is now really ours in Christ, in whom we are created anew and brought to our true destiny.

### 9: Sin - Wikipedia

*Temptation, Sin, Retribution: Lecture Notes on Shakespeare's Macbeth From Macbeth and King Lear, by Jessie K. Curtis. Lectures Definitions 1. Tragedy is a play of the passions ending in catastrophe.*

Rediscovering Precious Values, July November Transcriptions are intended to reproduce the source document accurately, adhering to the exact wording and punctuation of the original. In general, errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar have been neither corrected nor indicated by [sic]. Like other dialectical theologians he is forever insisting that there is a dialectical tension between time and eternity. Eternity is always relevant to, and yet ever tensionally set against, earth at every moment of time. Eternity may never be identified with earth, but earth may never declare independence from eternity. Both ideal and achievement must be suspended in a dialectical relation: It is essentially at this point that Niebuhr differs from Barthianism. He accuses German dialectical theology of being nearer Greek Platonistic dualism than the Christian paradoxes when vindicating the absolute difference between eternity and time. History and nature became meaningless in Barthian theology, as Niebuhr sees it, and even the very fact of the Incarnation ceases to be a historical fact, i. For Niebuhr, the only adequate religious expression of the human situation is a combination of this-worldly and other-worldly hopes. It is interesting to notice how Niebuhr proceeds to state Christianity dialectically. The thesis of the Christian ethic is the absoluteness of the moral ideal and the endless possibilities for the fulfillment of brotherhood in history. DCR] This is the wisdom of the cross. This is the Renaissance side of the Christian ethic. The antithesis is the foolishness of the cross. Original sin makes the fulfillment of the rule of Agape love impossible, for pride encourages man to pretend far more for himself than the facts will justify. This is the Reformation side of the Christian ethic. It contains a realistic pessimism which balances the initial Renaissance optimism. The synthesis is the power of the cross. Through faith and justification resources of grace are made accessible to the individual who remains within the pincers of the dialectic. One of the first problems to oppress Niebuhr was the terrible contrast between "moral man and immoral society", between the relatively decent, good behavior of man as an individual, and man as society. His analysis of this contrast led him to the roots of the contradiction of human nature. He cogently states, "Individual men may be moral in the sense that they are able to consider interests of others than their own in determining problems of conduct, and are capable, on occasion, of preferring the advantages of others to their own. But all these achievements are more difficult, if not impossible, for human societies and social groups. In every human group there is less reason to guide and to check impulse, less capacity for self transcendence, less ability to comprehend the need of others and therefore more unrestrained egoism than the individuals, who compare the groups, reveal in their personal relationships. MMIS] Again, Niebuhr was captured by the fact that the characteristics of the so-called Enlightenment of the 18th century, which had its roots in the Renaissance, had made a new appearance in the easy optimism of the first three decades of the twentieth century. Man was viewed as the measure of all things. History was to witness a quick and steady progress to Utopia. Man had only to be educated and put in agreeable environments in order that the kingdom of Heaven might be realized on earth. Modern liberal or "progressive" version of the Christian faith readily joined in to sing with the optimistic charms of modernity. The obvious refutations of this view of man, particularly in contemporary history, has brought about a definite swing away from this pattern of thought. Says Niebuhr, "Since one tragic experience has followed another, as if history has been designed to refute the vain delusions of modern man. FH] The basal problem is how man shall think of himself. On the one hand, he is a child of nature, caught up in its conditions, on the other, he is a transcendent being standing outside of nature. Niebuhr contends that in the course of history, the tendency is to confuse or to disregard the synthesis, and to construct a view of human nature on the basis of one or the other aspect of his dual being. Platonism and Aristotelianism understood man primarily from the standpoint of his rational faculties. Over against this so-called classical view Democritus, Heraclitus, and Epicurus interpreted man as wholly part of nature. Such dichotomic views of man, says Niebuhr, can have no conception of meaning in history, and no solution of the element of tragedy in human affairs, because of the necessity of their own logic. The modern

philosophic since the revival of classicism in the Renaissance fall into the same ancient errors. They are either idealistic or naturalistic. If the former, they tend to lose a sense of the finiteness of human nature, conceiving the self as identical with reason. If the latter modern man seeks to interpret himself wholly with reference to nature. This naturalism has in our times, taken concrete expression in Marxism and Fascism. Over against these anthropologies which fail to do justice to the dimension of human nature, and which, in spite of the inner logic of their assumptions and of the refutations of history, persist in falsifying the human situation by false notions of progress and by false dogmas of human perfectibility, Niebuhr sets forth the biblical and Christian Anthropology. It takes issue with the utopian optimism of Modernism, but with equal emphasis it repudiates the cynical pessimism that lies at the heart of the age. It views man in terms of both nature and of spirit. He is both in the realm of necessity and in the realm of freedom. At one and the same time man is under the dominion of nature and also transcends nature. God as will and personality is, therefore, the only ground of individuality. As creature, man is made in the image of God. But along with this high measure of the human stature stands also the concomitant fact that man is a sinner. Niebuhr never wearies of pointing out that man is a sinner. He points out that such modern thinkers as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud, in their explorations of the dark depths of the human heart, confirm afresh the biblical doctrine of the sinfulness of man. Niebuhr sees sin as what results when man tries to find security for himself outside the tension of the dialectical relation between time and eternity. Rather it places evil at the very centre of human personality: Niebuhr resorts to the formula of "original sin" to explain why evil in history belongs to man. Anxiety is the inevitable concomitant of the paradox of freedom and finiteness in which man is involved. Anxiety is the internal precondition of sin. It is the inevitable spiritual state of man, standing in the paradoxical situation of freedom and finiteness. Since sin does not flow anxiety, man is responsible for his sin. If one answers that the doctrine is illogical, Niebuhr would retort that the doctrine may be logically absurd, but it is psychologically profound. The fall is localized in th[at] moment in freedom where the free self, assenting to the law of Agape, peers down into the empirical self and discovers selfishness. For this reason "every man is Adam". The Fall is a mythological expression for what is psychologically true in each person. The fall, says Niebuhr, "is an inward conflict between the is and the ought of life, between the ideal possibilities to which freedom encourages man and the drive of egoism, which reason sharpens rather than assuages. Ethical fruitfulness is measured by the ability of norms to maintain a tension between what is and what ought to be, between the historical and the transcendental. This means that eternity is the absolute and history the relative, and anything in history which is a pointer to the eternal can be no more than a symbol of the eternal. To identify anything in history with eternity is to break the dialectical relation between time and eternity. Symbols are rallying points for the religious myth. The myth is a story, the origin of which is generally forgotten, which serves to explain the basis of a religious practice or belief. The myth is an artistic attempt to give depth to history. Says Niebuhr, "Meaning can be attributed to history only by a mythology. The argument in the latter book turns, as the subtitle suggests, on the contrast between the Christian and th[e] modern view of history. The "modern view" is that history itself is the redeemer. Only after repentance, is man able to receive the Christian revelation. Within such a view is there no hope for man? Is man consigned to remain suspended within this dialectical tension guilty when he performs and guilty when he fails to perform? The moment a person assumes the posture of repentence before God and confesses helplessness in the inward man, that instant God injects power into his heart. These resources are at once recognized as vitalities which have come from beyond man. Since the divine Grace comes from beyond man, it operates not in history, but outside, beyond, and at the "edge" of history. Justification supplies man with a "new nature. Justification is a feeling in the free self of a spiritual relief following upon the occasion of conversion and repentance. This release cannot be accounted for on the ground that one has merited release himself, for he remains a sinner; therefore, it must be the imputed righteousness of Christ. God accepts the intention to live according to the rule of Christ as the very act itself. The possession is always a righteousness by faith. Man is free from guilt "in principle" only never "in fact. If man ever achieved Agape in fact, then the dialectic would be spoiled by history containing its own ideal. We must hasten to say, however, that his statement of these doctrines are not at all orthodox. The second coming of Christ is the symbolic way faith declares its assurance that Christ, who has already overcome the

world, as Tetas, will assuredly achieve that triumph at the end of history. The first coming--Christ after the flesh, is the disclosure, and the second coming is the fulfillment. The resurrection of the body is a symbol implying on the one hand that eternity will fulfill the richness and variety which the temporal process has elaborated. On the other hand, it implies that the condition of finiteness and freedom is a problem for which there is no solution by human power. Only God can solve this problem. For a clearer understanding of Niebuhr Philosophy of history it is necessary at this point to discuss his Christology, since, for him Christ is the heaven-sent clue to clarify the meaning of history. Because a free man stands outside of history, his full explanation requires a pattern or mind which likewise stands outside of history. History is one-dimensional; it suggests, therefore, more than it can explain. If history is to have meaning, such a meaning must not be identified with the process itself; for that which exemplifies a pattern is numerically different from the pattern. There is numerical difference between the blueprints used in constructing a building and the finished building itself. Stated religiously, Christ is the mind or blueprint which gives moral finality to our ideals.

Opportunities and problems : final comments. Amazing Kids (High-Interest/Low-Readability) Joseph Straus  
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