

Nature of Sin/Human Nature of Christ
Biblical and Ellen White Data
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I. Sin

A. Definitions of sin:

1. “Sin is lawlessness [*anomia*]” (1 John 3:4). BDAG: *anomia*: “1. state or condition of being disposed to what is lawless, *lawlessness*; 2. the product of a lawless disposition; *a lawless deed*”. Note that 1 John 3:4 uses both meanings: “Whoever commits sin also commits a lawless deed [product of lawless disposition]; in fact, sin is lawlessness [state or condition of being disposed to what is lawless].” Note NIV: “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.”

2. “Whatever is not from [*ek*] faith is sin” (Rom 14:23). Sin is defined in terms of mistrust, the breaking of a personal faith relationship. [See Gulley, *Ministry* June 85]

Cf. Gen 3: distrust of God (breaking the faith relationship) comes before the overt sinful act of eating the forbidden fruit.

B. There are four aspects of sin in humans after the Fall (see 1 John):

1. State (sinful nature): “If we say that we *have* [present tense of *echo*] *no sin*, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). The verb *echo* implies possession, or condition, a state of sin. This state of “having sin” is different than the next two aspects of sin, both of which John says should not (or may not) be experienced.

Cf. John 14:30: “for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has [*echo*] nothing in me.”

2. Acts (sinful deeds): “My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not [commit acts of] sin [aorist punctiliar]. And if anyone sins [aorist punctiliar], we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

3. Way of life (living in sin, lack of personal relationship): “Whoever abides in Him does not [continue in] sin [present continuous]. Whoever sins [present participle] has neither seen Him nor known Him” (1 John 3:6). Sin as describing a broken/severed personal relationship. Cf. 1 John 3:9; 5:18.

The state of sin is unavoidable, while the sinful acts and way of life (broken relationship) are to be overcome.

C. “Original” sin and the Depraved Sinful Nature

1. When Adam and Eve sinned, their very natures, which before the Fall had no corrupt propensities or tendencies to evil, now became depraved and evil, curved inward in selfishness, with a bent toward evil (Gen 1–3).

In what consisted the strength of the assault made upon Adam, which caused his fall? It was not *indwelling sin*; for God made Adam after His own character, pure and upright. There were no *corrupt principles in the first Adam, no corrupt propensities or tendencies to evil*. Adam was as faultless as the angels before God's throne. These things are inexplicable, but many things which now we cannot understand will be made plain when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known (Letter 191, 1899). {1BC 1083.6}

PP 53: “*But should they once yield to temptation, their nature would become so depraved that in themselves they would have no power and no disposition to resist Satan.*”

PP 61: “After their sin Adam and Eve were no longer to dwell in Eden. They earnestly entreated that they might remain in the home of their innocence and joy. They confessed that they had forfeited all right to that happy abode, but pledged themselves for the future to yield strict obedience to God. But they were told that *their nature had become depraved by sin*; they had lessened their strength to resist evil and had opened the way for Satan to gain more ready access to them. In their innocence they had yielded to temptation; and now, in a state of conscious guilt, they would have less power to maintain their integrity.”

When Adam apostatized, he placed himself on Satan's side; *his nature became evil, and he became separated from God*. Had there been no interference on the part of God, Satan and man would have formed an alliance against heaven, and together they would have carried on a battle against God. There is not a natural enmity between fallen angels and fallen man. Naturally both are united in rebellion against good. Evil, wherever it exists, will always league with evil against good, so that naturally fallen angels and fallen men are linked in a desperate companionship. {RH, May 3, 1906 par. 2}

God declares: “I will put enmity.” This enmity is not naturally entertained. *When man transgressed the divine law, his nature became evil, and he was in harmony, and not at variance, with Satan*. There exists naturally no enmity between sinful man and the originator of sin. Both became evil through apostasy. The apostate is never at rest, except as he obtains sympathy and support by inducing others to follow his example. For this reason fallen angels and wicked men unite in desperate companionship. Had not God specially interposed, Satan and man would have entered into an alliance against Heaven; and instead of cherishing enmity against Satan, the whole human family would have been united in opposition to God. {GC 505.2}

Satan tempted man to sin, as he had caused angels to rebel, that he might thus secure co-operation in his warfare against Heaven. There was no dissension between himself and the fallen angels as regards their hatred of Christ; while on all

other points there was discord, they were firmly united in opposing the authority of the Ruler of the universe. But when Satan heard the declaration that enmity should exist between himself and the woman, and between his seed and her seed, he knew that his efforts to *deprave human nature* would be interrupted; that by some means man was to be enabled to resist his power. {GC 505.3}

Satan separated himself from God, and selfishness became the law of those who placed themselves under his leadership. He came to this earth, and entered upon the work of conforming all things to himself. He sought in every way to deface the divine image in man, and to place his principles where the principles of heaven should be. {RH, April 16, 1901 par. 4}

To a large degree Satan has succeeded in the execution of his plans. Through the medium of influence, taking advantage of the action of mind on mind, *he prevailed on Adam to sin. Thus at its very source human nature was corrupted.* And ever since then sin has continued its hateful work, reaching from mind to mind. *Every sin committed awakens the echoes of the original sin.* {RH, April 16, 1901 par. 5}

2. As a result of Adam's sin, all the human family ("the many") were constituted (legally in Adam) sinners by nature, guilty and condemned before God.

Rom 5:18–19: "So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made [legally constituted, *kathistemi*] sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made [legally constituted, *kathistemi*] righteous." Cf. BDAG: "in possible legal sense"

God made every provision in man's behalf, creating him only a little lower than the angels. *Adam disobeyed, and entailed sin upon his posterity*; but God gave His Son for the redemption of the race. Christ took on him the nature of man, and passed over the ground where Adam fell, to be tested and tried as all human beings are tested and tried. Satan came to him as an angel of light, to induce him if possible to commit sin, and thus place the human race entirely under the dominion of evil. But Christ was victorious. Christ was victorious, and man was placed on vantage ground with God. {6MR 3.1} = Letter 143, 1900

The *inheritance of children is that of sin*. Sin has separated them from God. Jesus gave His life that He might unite the broken links to God. *As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death.* But Christ steps in and passes over the ground where Adam fell, enduring every test in man's behalf. . . . CG 475

3. Since Adam, all ("the many") are born sinners by nature. We sin because we are sinners, and not just become sinners when we sin.

Job 14:4: “who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.”

Psa 51:5 (Heb 7): “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.” The context is not concerned with the mother’s sin, but David’s state of sin (sinful nature) by birth, in fact, already at conception.

Psa 58:3 (Heb 4): “The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth.”

Jer 17:9: “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked [corrupt]; Who can know it?”

Matt 15:19: “Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

John 3:6: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Rom 3:10: “There is none righteousness, no, not one.” (Citing Ps 14:1-3)

Rom 7:7: “What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.” [Paul as Pharisee knew the sin of deed, but at his conversion he saw not the sin of deed but the sin of nature, that he was a sinner by nature, revealed in his relationship to the tenth commandment, which deals with attitude and not outward actions.]

Rom 8:7: “The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

Eph 2:3: “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

1 Tim 1:15: “This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” [not “I was, but I am, *eimi ego*]

Concerning the creation of Adam it is said, “In the likeness of God made He him;” but man, after the Fall, “begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.” While Adam was created sinless, in the likeness of God, Seth, like Cain, *inherited the fallen nature of his parents*. PP 80

It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and *because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law*. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. SC 62

It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our *hearts are evil*, and we cannot change them. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Job 14:4; Romans 8:7. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness. {SC 18.1}

You cannot bring up your children as you should without divine help; *for the fallen nature of Adam always strives for the mastery*. The heart must be prepared for the principles of truth, that they may root in the soul and find nourishment in the life. {AH 205.1}

Just before his cruel death, Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain a victory. He had kept his Father's commandments; and there was no sin in him that Satan could triumph over, no weakness or defect that he could use to his advantage. But *we are sinful by nature, and we have a work to do to cleanse the soul-temple of every defilement*. Review and Herald, May 27, 1884.

We are *sinful by nature, and so are commanded to be zealous and repent*. If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. We must do what we can on our part; but our own merit will never commend us to the favor of God. It is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us, his blood that will cleanse us. {ST, August 21, 1884 par. 4}

Jesus continued: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." *By nature the heart is evil*, and "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job 14:4. No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Rom. 8:7; Matt. 15:19. *The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure*. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a *transformation of nature*. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. {DA 172.1}

"God declares, '*There is none righteousness, no, not one*' [Rom. 3:10]. *All have the same sinful nature*. All are liable to make mistakes. No one is perfect. The Lord Jesus died for the erring, that they might be forgiven. It is not our work to condemn. Christ did not come to condemn, but to save." {HP 292; 18MR 334-5} = Ms 31, 1911

Human nature is depraved, and is justly condemned by a holy God. But provision is made for the repenting sinner, so that by faith in the atonement of the only begotten Son of God, he may receive forgiveness of sin, find justification, receive adoption into the heavenly family, and become an inheritor of the kingdom of God. Transformation of character is wrought through the operation of the Holy Spirit, which works upon the human agent, implanting in him, according to his desire and consent to have it done, a new nature. The image of God is restored to the soul, and day by day he is strengthened and renewed by grace, and is enabled more and more perfectly to reflect the character of Christ in righteousness and true holiness. {RH, September 17, 1895 par. 7}

Bad habits are more easily formed than good habits, and the bad habits are given up with more difficulty. The *natural depravity of the heart* accounts for this well-known fact--that it takes far less labor to demoralize the youth, to corrupt their ideas of moral and religious character, than to engraft upon their character the enduring, pure, and uncorrupted habits of righteousness and truth. Self-indulgence, love of pleasure, enmity, pride, self-esteem, envy, jealousy, will grow spontaneously, without example and teaching. In our present fallen state all that is needed is to give up the mind and character to its natural tendencies. IHP 195

There is a great work to be done for many of us. Our minds and characters must become as the mind and character of Christ. *Selfishness is inwrought in our very being.* It has come to us as

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an inheritance, and has been cherished by many as a precious treasure. HS 138–9.

In order to understand this matter aright, we must remember that *our hearts are naturally depraved, and we are unable of ourselves to pursue a right course.* It is only by the grace of God, combined with the most earnest effort on our part, that we can gain the victory. {CT 544.2}= IHP 163

One of the deplorable effects of the original apostasy was the loss of man's power to govern his own heart. When there is a separation from the Source of your strength, when you are lifted up in pride, *you cannot but transgress the law of your moral constitution.*--Letter 10, 1888, p. 1, 2. (To E. P. Daniels, April, 1888.) 8MR 208

Many, many confessions should never be spoken in the hearing of mortals; for the result is that which the limited judgment of finite beings does not anticipate. . . . God will be better glorified if we confess the secret, *inbred corruption of the heart* to Jesus alone than if we open its recesses to finite, erring man, who cannot judge righteously unless his heart is constantly imbued with the Spirit of God. . . . Do not pour into human ears the story which God alone should hear. 5T 645

It is our privilege to have daily a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus. We need not be alarmed if the path lies through conflicts and sufferings. We may have the peace which passeth understanding; but it will cost us battles with the powers of darkness, struggles severe against selfishness and *inbred sin*. The victories gained daily through persevering, untiring effort in well-doing will be precious through Christ who has loved us, who gave Himself for us, that He

might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a "peculiar people, zealous of good works." . . . {LHU 98.5}

Let us open our hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Let us work cheerfully, joyfully in the service of our Master. A slothful, languid professor will never secure an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. From the cross to the crown there is earnest work to be done. There is wrestling with *inbred sin*; there is warfare against outward wrong. {RH, November 29, 1887 par. 12}

4. All humans after Adam's Fall ("the many") are born with innate propensities of disobedience, with a bent toward sin/corruption.

Eph 2:3: "Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." (NIV: "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.")

"The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, *without a taint of sin upon him*; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. *Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience.*" 5 BC 1128

Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ's mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore. He opens to us the riches of the universe, and by Him the power to discern and to appropriate these treasures is imparted.

Christ is the "Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. As through Christ every human being has life, so also through Him every soul receives some ray of divine light. Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart. But against these principles there is struggling an antagonistic power. The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. *There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist.* To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ. Co-operation with that power is man's greatest need. In all educational effort should not this co-operation be the highest aim? Ed 28–29

5. Although born with innate propensities of disobedience, we are not held culpable (responsible, condemned) for the sinful nature because of the covering by the atoning blood of Christ.

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me." *It is inevitable that children should suffer from the consequences of parental wrongdoing, but they are not punished for the parents' guilt, except as they participate in their sins.* It is usually the case, however, that children walk in the steps of their parents. By

inheritance and example the sons become partakers of the father's sin. Wrong tendencies, perverted appetites, and debased morals, as well as physical disease and degeneracy, are transmitted as a legacy from father to son, to the third and fourth generation. This fearful truth should have a solemn power to restrain men from following a course of sin. {PP 306.3}

We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by his perfect obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. *Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression.* ST May 19, 1890; FW 88

We are enlightened by the precepts of the law, but no man can by them be justified. *Weighed and found wanting is our inscription by nature.* But Christ is our mediator, and accepting Him as our Saviour, we may claim the promise, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). {HP 156.7}

6. All Christians, even those most mature who would rather die than commit a known sin, remain in constant dependance upon the covering blood of Christ. There will never be a time till glorification that we will not need the covering of Christ's imputed righteousness to cover for the "earthly corruption" (of our sinful nature).

Exod 29:28–34; Num 28:3–8: the "continual/regular whole burnt offering" (*'olat tamid*), represented the people's constant dependance upon the atoning blood of Christ (PP XXX)

Lev 16:24: even after all the Day of Atonement ceremonies, cleansing the camp and the people (in type), there was immediately yet another burn offering was sacrificed "to make atonement" for the people. The people, even though cleansed of their acts of sin, were yet sinners in need of the atonement.

Rom 3:23: "All have sinned [aorist tense], and [continue to, present tense] fall short of the glory of God."

Rom 6:5–6: "For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,"⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with [*katargeo*, "rendered inoperative, made to lose its power or effectiveness", probably instead of "done away with", although both are meanings of the word], that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Rom 7:18: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing."

1 Cor 15:53–54: "For this corruptible [*phthartos*] must put on incorruption [*aphtharsia*]"

"The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but *passing through the corrupt channels of*

humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God's right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned.

"Oh, that all may see that everything in obedience, in penitence, in praise and thanksgiving, must be placed upon the glowing fire of the righteousness of Christ. The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat." 1 SM 344

Discussions may be entered into by mortals strenuously advocating creature merit, and each man striving for the supremacy, but they simply do not know that all the time, in principle and character, they are misrepresenting the truth as it is in Jesus. They are in a fog of bewilderment. They need the divine love of God which is represented by gold tried in the fire; they need the white raiment of Christ's pure character; and they need the heavenly eyesalve that they might discern with astonishment the utter worthlessness of creature merit to earn the wages of eternal life. There may be a fervor of labor and an intense affection, high and noble achievement of intellect, a breadth of understanding, and the humblest self-abasement, laid at the feet of our Redeemer; but there is not one jot more than the grace and talent first given of God. There must be nothing less given than duty prescribes, and there

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cannot be one jot more given than they have first received; and *all must be laid upon the fire of Christ's righteousness to cleanse it from its earthly odor before it rises in a cloud of fragrant incense to the great Jehovah and is accepted as a sweet savor.* {FW 23.2}

I ask, How can I present this matter as it is? The Lord Jesus imparts all the powers, all the grace, all the penitence, all the inclination, all the pardon of sins, in presenting His righteousness for man to grasp by living faith--which is also the gift of God. If you would gather together everything that is good and holy and noble and lovely in man and then present the subject to the angels of God as acting a part in the salvation of the human soul or in merit, the proposition would be rejected as treason. Standing in the presence of their Creator and looking upon the unsurpassed glory which enshrouds His person, they are looking upon the Lamb of God given from the foundation of the world to a life of humiliation, to be rejected of sinful men, to be despised, to be crucified. Who can measure the infinity of the sacrifice! {FW 24.1}

Christ for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. And any works that man can render to God will be far less than nothingness. *My requests are made acceptable only because they are laid upon Christ's righteousness.* The idea of doing anything to merit the grace of pardon is fallacy from beginning to end. "Lord, in my hand no price I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." {FW 24.2}

None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act,

men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the *sinfulness of their nature*. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. {AA 561.1}

So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle's confession our own: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Romans 7:18; Galatians 6:14. {AA 561.2}

Are you in Christ? Not if you do not acknowledge yourselves *erring, helpless, condemned sinners*. Not if you are exalting and glorifying self. If there is any good in you, it is wholly attributable to the mercy of a compassionate Saviour. Your birth, your reputation, your wealth, your talents, your virtues, your piety, your philanthropy, or anything else in

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you or connected with you, will not form a bond of union between your soul and Christ. Your connection with the church, the manner in which your brethren regard you, will be of no avail unless you believe in Christ. It is not enough to believe about Him; you must believe in Him. You must rely wholly upon His saving grace. {5T 48.3}

Jesus is perfect. Christ's righteousness is imputed unto them, and He will say, "Take away the filthy garments from him and clothe him with change of raiment." Jesus makes up for our *unavoidable deficiencies*. Where Christians are faithful to each other, true and loyal to the Captain of the Lord's host, never betraying trusts into the enemy's hands, they will be transformed into Christ's character. Jesus will abide in their hearts by faith.--Letter 17a, 1891. (See also a similar statement made in 1885 in Faith and Works, p. 50.) {3SM 196.1}

But he who is truly seeking for holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he *falls so far short of meeting its requirements*. SL 81

7. All humans after Adam's Fall ("the many") not only have innate propensities to evil, but also cultivated propensities of depravity.

2 Pet 1:4: "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption [*phthora*, "inward depravity" BDAG] that is in the world by lust."

2 Pet 2:19: "promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption [*phthora*, "inward depravity" BDAG]; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved."

Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any *hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency*. Instead of being held in bondage to the lower nature, they are to rule every appetite and

passion. God has not left us to battle with

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evil in our own finite strength. *Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong*, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to impart. {MH 175.1}

The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man--the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, so far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their *evil propensities*. They do not yield the will to God. They do not choose to serve Him. {MH 176.1}

He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. *Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong*, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ's strength for victory. {AA 476.3}

8. Humans after the Fall (“the many”) are tempted both inwardly (because of their innate and cultivated propensities to sin) and outwardly (by Satan).

James 1:14–15: “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

1 Cor 7:5: “So that Satan will not tempt you because of lack of self-control”; cf. 1 Thess 3:5: “For this reason, when I could endure *it* no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain.”

II. Human Nature of Christ

A. Importance, and Mystery!

The *humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God*. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man; He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. Yet He was God in the flesh. When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where on thou standest is holy ground.” We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth.--The Youth's Instructor, Oct. 13, 1898. {7ABC 443.1}

The only plan that could be devised to save the human race was that which called for the incarnation, humiliation, and crucifixion of the Son of God, the Majesty of heaven. After the plan

of salvation was devised, Satan could have no ground upon which to found his suggestion that God, because so great, could care nothing for so insignificant a creature as man.--The Signs of the Times, Jan. 20, 1890. {7ABC 443.2}

In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an *unfathomable mystery*, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and god became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.--The Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896. {7ABC 443.3}

As the worker studies the life of Christ, and the character of His mission is dwelt upon, each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded. The *subject is inexhaustible*. The study of the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice and mediatorial work, will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last.--Gospel Workers, p. 251. {7ABC 444.1}

That God should thus be manifest in the flesh is indeed a *mystery*; and without the help of the holy spirit we cannot hope to comprehend this subject. The most humbling lesson that man has to learn is the nothingness of human wisdom, and the folly of trying, by his own unaided efforts, to find out God.--The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906. {7ABC 444.2}

Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the *two natures were mysteriously blended in one person*--the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. . . .

This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become as nothingness.--The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1113. {7ABC 444.3-4}

We cannot explain the *great mystery* of the plan of redemption. Jesus took upon himself humanity, that He might reach humanity; but *we cannot explain how divinity was clothed with humanity*. An angel would not have known how to sympathize with fallen man, but Christ came to the world and suffered all our temptations, and carried all our griefs.--The Review and Herald, Oct. 1, 1889. {7ABC 444.5}

It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain, a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be

warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be.--The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1129. {7ABC 448.2} [= The Baker Letter]

B. Jesus was fully divine and fully human. He “clothed divinity with humanity.”

Old Testament Messianic Passages: e.g., Isa 7:14; 9:5–6: human Son who is called God

John 1:1–14: The Word was God, and became (human) flesh.

Phil 2:5–7: He was in the form of God, and He takes the form of men. (See discussion below on this passage, in section II C)

The apostle would call our attention from ourselves to the Author of our salvation. *He presents before us His two natures, divine and human. . . . He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was his own act, and by His own consent. He clothed His divinity with humanity.* He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration of the universe of God. *He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man.* He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. *He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for awhile relinquished. . . .* He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul. He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will.--RH July 5, 1887. {7ABC 446.1}

Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the *two natures were mysteriously blended in one person*--the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible.--The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1113. {7ABC 446.2}

Christ came as the sinner's substitute to bear the guilt himself, which justly belonged to man. Through the perfection of his character he was accepted of the Father as a mediator for sinful man. He only could save man by imputing to him his righteousness. *His sinless, divine nature united him to God, while his human nature brought him into sympathy with the weaknesses and sufferings of humanity.* "For we have not an High Priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering, and thus qualified to help fallen man just where he needed help. {YI, January 1, 1874 par. 10}

"Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3), He lived a sinless life. *Now by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us.* He bids us by faith in Him attain to the

glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our "Father which is in heaven is perfect." {DA 311.5}

"Christ says, My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me away from the byways of sin. As Christ worked, so you are to work. In tenderness and love seek to lead the erring to the right way. This will call for great patience and forbearance, and for the constant manifestation of the forgiving love of Christ. Daily the Saviour's compassion must be revealed. The example He has left must be followed. *He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature*, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted." {MM 181.3}

[As we will note below, the "sinful nature" here refers to the "lessened capacities" due to human infirmities, but not the propensities or inclinations to sin.]

"Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those he wished to save. In him was no guile or sinfulness; he was ever pure and undefiled; yet he took upon him our sinful nature. *Clothing his divinity with humanity*, that he might associate with fallen humanity, he sought to redeem for man that which by disobedience Adam had lost, for himself and for the world. In his own character Jesus manifested to the world the character of God; he pleased not himself, but went about doing good. His whole history, for more than thirty years, was of pure, disinterested benevolence." {RH, August 22, 1907 par. 1}

Laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, *Christ clothed His divinity with humanity*, that human beings might be raised from their degradation and placed on vantage-ground. Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that he had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. *He veiled his divinity with the garb of humanity*, but He did not part with His divinity. A *divine-human saviour*, He came to stand at the head of the fallen race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood. That human beings might be partakers of the divine nature, He came to this earth, and lived a life of perfect obedience.—RH June 15, 1905. {7ABC 444-445.}

In Christ, *divinity and humanity were combined. Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place, but humanity by being united to divinity*, withstood the fiercest test of temptation in the wilderness. The prince of this world came to Christ after his long fast, when He was an hungered, and suggested to Him to command the stones to become bread. But the plan of God, devised for the salvation of man, provided that Christ should know hunger, and poverty, and every phase of man's experience.—RH Feb. 18, 1890. {7ABC 445.1}

The more we think about Christ's becoming a babe here on earth, the more wonderful it appears. How can it be that the helpless babe in Bethlehem's manger is still the divine Son of God? Though we cannot understand it, we can believe that He who made the worlds, for our sakes became a helpless babe. Though higher than any of the angels, though as great as the Father on the throne of heaven he became one with us. In Him *God and man became one*, and it is in this fact that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in the flesh, we look upon *God in humanity*, and see in Him the brightness of divine glory, the express image of God

the Father.--The Youth's Instructor, Nov. 21, 1895. {7ABC 445.2}

No one, looking upon the childlike countenance, shining with animation, could say that Christ was just like other children. He was *God in human flesh*. When urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong.--YI Sept. 8, 1898. {7ABC 445.3}

As a member of the human family He was mortal, but as a God He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring

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immortality to light. . . . What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. *The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man!*--The Review and Herald, July 5, 1887. {7ABC 445.4}

C. Jesus was truly human, taking the liabilities and infirmities of degenerate humanity, with the deteriorated condition of sinful Adam and his descendants after the Fall, with the possibility of yielding to temptation.

John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

Phil 2:7-8: "[He] emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the *likeness of men*. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

"Likeness" is *homoioma*: "likeness, image, form, appearance"

BDAG: 1) "state of having common experiences, *likeness*" – Rom 6:5; Mk 4:30

2) "state of being similar in appearance, *image, form*

–*image, copy*: Rom 1:23 (=resembling); Deut 4:16ff.; 1 Km 6:4; 4 Km 16:10;

–*form, appearance*: Rev 9:7 (locusts resembling horses in appearance);

Deut 4:12; Josh 22:28; Ezek 1:16

3) "There is no general agreement on the mng. in two related passages in which Paul uses our word in speaking of Christ's earthly life. The expressions ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων (P⁴⁶, Marcion, Orig.: ἀνθρώπου) **Phil 2:7** and ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας **Ro 8:3** could mean that the Lord in his earthly ministry possessed a completely human form and that his physical body was capable of sinning as human bodies are, or that he had the form of a human being and was looked upon as such (cp. En 31:2 ἐν ὁμ. w. gen.= 'similar to', 'looking like'; Aesop, Fab. 140 H. of Hermes ὁμοιωθεὶς ἀνθρώπῳ), but without losing his identity as a divine being even in this world. In the light of what Paul says about Jesus in general it is prob. that he uses our word to bring out both that Jesus in his earthly career was similar to sinful humans and yet not totally like

them.” (BDAG) = “likeness” as similar but also unique

Another (my preferred) suggested viable option for the meaning of *homoïoma* in Phil 2:7: “state of being similar in appearance, *image, form*” (meaning no. 2 in BDAG); Phil 2:7-8 describes the “form” or “appearance” which Christ took: the “form” of a man. This is strengthened by what immediately precedes Phil 2:7b in v. 7a (“form [*morphe*, ‘form, shape, outward appearance’] of a servant”) and follows in v. 8 (“Being found in appearance [*schema*, ‘outward appearance, form, shape’] as a man. . .” Paul uses three synonyms for “appearance” or “outward form.” This meaning is further supported by the contrast with the previous verse 6, where Christ is described as One “who, being in the *form* [*morphe*] of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.” The contrast is between Christ once having the form [*morphe*] of God, and His emptying Himself of this form to take human form (the form [*morphe*] of a servant, the form [*homoïma*] of men, the form [*schema*] of a man.) Finally, this interpretation is substantiated by Ellen White’s paraphrase of this verse:

“He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for awhile relinquished. . . .” –RH July 5, 1887. {7ABC 446.1}

Even more support is found in LXX usages of the term: *homoïoma* is used for the following Heb words in the LXX OT:

temunah: “form”: Deut 4:12, 15 (“you saw no form”), 23, 25; 5:8; Exod 20:4 (= “carved images” in likeness of animate objects)

tabnit: “copy of an original” :Deut 4:17–18; Josh 22:28; Ps 106:20 (=Rom 1); Ps 144:12; Ezek 8:3, 10

to ’ar: “appearance”: Judg 8:18; (“resembled/appearance of a son of a king”)

tselem “image”: 1 Sam 6:5 “likeness/image of your tumors”

demut: “figure, likeness”: 2 Ki 16:10 (“form” of altar); 2 Chron 4:3 (“figures” of oxen); Isa 40:18–19 (what “likeness/form” do you compare Me?); Ezek 1:5 (human “form”), 16 (“like/appearance” of beryl color, or “the four had one [the same] likeness/form”), 22 (“likeness/form of firmament”; NJPS = “form”), 26 (“something resembling/shaped like a throne”), 28 (“likeness/form of glory of God of Israel”); 8:2 (“likeness/form of a man”); 10:1 (“likeness/form of a throne”), 10 (“looked alike/similar form”), 21 (“likeness/form of a hand”); 23:15 (“looked like/appearance of Babylonian officials”)

rew (Aram): “form”: Dan 3:92 [25 Heb and Eng] (“form of the fourth like the son of God”)

Note that the preponderance of LXX usages is with the meaning of “form, appearance,” (with several times in Ezekiel possibly meaning “likeness,” in the sense of “similar but also unique”, but also possibly meaning “form, appearance” even in these cases). Note also that the LXX does NOT use *homoïoma* in translating “likeness” (*demut*) in Gen 1:26, where together with *tselem* “image” *demut* probably refers to the inner character/nature of the person as opposed to the outward physical appearance. The Greek word used in this instance is *homoiosis* (“likeness, resemblance”); cf. James 3:9. The word *homoïoma* in the LXX seems largely reserved for emphasizing the outward “form” or “appearance” of something, but can also occasionally mean “likeness” in the sense of “similar but unique”.

Rom 8:3: “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh.”

[See Cranfield, ICC Romans 8, pp. 379-383, for 5 options why Paul said “in *homoïoma* of sinful flesh” and not just “in sinful flesh”, summarized in Douglass, *Ministry*, June 1985, 14–15]

1. Paul did not wish to imply the reality of Christ’s human nature.

[Cranfield’s Rebuttal: this is docetism, contradicted by the next verse “in the flesh”]

2. Traditional view: Paul wished to avoid implying that Jesus assumed fallen human nature. Jesus really took flesh, but it was only like, not identical with, our flesh.

[cf. John Murray, NICNT on Romans, 280: “This mode of expression occurs nowhere else. Why did Paul use it here? . . . He is using the word “likeness” not for the purpose of suggesting any unreality in respect of our Lord’s human nature. That would contradict Paul’s express language elsewhere in this epistle and in his other epistles. He is under the necessity of using this word here because he uses the term ‘sinful flesh’ and he could not have said that Christ was sent in ‘human flesh.’ That would have contradicted the sinlessness of Jesus for which the New Testament is jealous throughout. So the question is: why did Paul use the term ‘sinful flesh’ when it is necessary to guard so jealously the sinlessness of the Lord’s flesh? He is concerned to show that when the Father sent the Son into this world of sin, misery, and of death, he sent him in a manner that brought him into the closest relation to sinful humanity that it was possible for him to come without becoming himself sinful. He himself was holy and undefiled—the word ‘likeness’ guards this truth. But he came in the same human nature. And that is the purpose of saying ‘sinful flesh.’ No other combination of terms could have fulfilled these purposes so perfectly.”

Cf. Also Everett F. Harrison, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* on Romans, 87: “Observe with what care the incarnation is stated. Paul does not say ‘in sinful flesh,’ lest the Son’s sinlessness be compromised, nor ‘in the likeness of flesh,’ which would convey a docetic idea and thereby deny the reality of the humanity of our Lord, making it only an appearance of corporeality. As it

stands, the terminology is in full agreement with Philippians 2:7: ‘being made in human likeness.’”

Cf. John Stott, IVP Commentary on Romans (1994), 219: “This somewhat roundabout phrase, which has puzzled commentators mainly because of its use of ‘likeness’, was doubtless intended to combat false views of the incarnation. That is, the Son came neither ‘in the likeness of flesh’, only seeming to be human, as the Docetists taught, for his humanity was real; nor ‘in sinful flesh’, assuming a fallen nature, for his humanity was sinless, but ‘in the likeness of sinful flesh’, because his humanity was both real and sinless simultaneously.”]

[Cranfield’s Rebuttal: “it is open to the general theological objection that it was not unfallen, but fallen, human nature, which needed redeeming.”]

RD: But this catchphrase, used often by the early Church Fathers, including Augustine, is of questionable truth-value; if Christ had to redeem sinners, then must He become a sinner? If he was to redeem alcoholics, did He need to become an alcoholic?

3. Paul used *homoioima* to indicate that Jesus took our fallen human nature, but it was only *like* ours because ours is guilty of actual sin and He never sinned.

This is the position of Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1949), 314–6. “Out of ‘the flesh’ arose for him the same temptations as for us” (315), but also he “knew no sin,” hence Paul uses the term *homoioima*. Because Christ “knew no sin” “Paul can therefore not use the absolute expression *sarx hamartias*, ‘sinful flesh’; for that would mean that Christ was subject to the power of sin in the same way as we who are sinners. Paul wants to come as close to that as possible without falling into conflict with the sinlessness of Christ, of which he is utterly certain. He comes close to the dividing line; but he does not step over it.” (Ibid.)

[Cranfield’s Rebuttal: *Homoioima* is here related to the nature discussed and not the question of sinning. “The difference between Christ’s freedom from actual sin and our sinfulness is not a matter of the character of His human nature (of its being not quite the same as ours), but of what He did with His human nature.”]

4. *Homoioima* here means “form” rather than merely “likeness.”

[Cranfield’s Rebuttal: if Paul meant to say this, it is difficult to understand why he did not simply say *en sarki hamartias*.]

RD: But see discussion below under exegesis of Rom 8:3 (especially the EGW citations) comparing Rom 8:3 to John 3:14.

5. *Homoioima* here means “likeness” in the sense of similarity (He took [fallen] human nature)

and uniqueness (He was also divine). It “does have its sense of ‘likeness’: but the intention is not in any way to call in question. . . the reality of Christ’s *sarx hamartias*, but to draw attention to the fact that, while the Son of God truly assumed *sarx hamartias*, He never became *sarx hamartias* and nothing more, nor even *sarx hamartias* indwelt by the Holy Spirit and nothing more (as a Christian might be described as being), but always remained Himself” [i.e., human *and* also divine]. In other words, “The Son of God assumed the selfsame fallen human nature that is ours, but that in His case that fallen human nature was never the whole of Him—He never ceased to be the eternal Son of God.” This passages stresses where the conflict occurred. God’s “condemnation” of sin “took place in the flesh, i.e., in Christ’s flesh, Christ’s human nature. . . .If we recognize that Paul believed it was fallen human nature which the Son of God assumed, we shall probably be inclined to see here also a reference to the unintermittent warfare of His whole earthly life by which He forced our rebellious nature to render a perfect obedience to God.” (Quotes from Cranfield).

[= Cranfield’s position]

Exegesis of Rom 8:3:

“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh” (NASB).

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh” (NKJV).

“In the likeness of sinful flesh:

1. “Likeness” as “form, appearance”: (support for meaning no. 4 above): Christ took the “form” of sinful flesh” by becoming our sin-bearer and being treated as a sinner:

Cf. Parallel with symbol of serpent in wilderness: John 3:14: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” SD 222: “What a strange symbol of Christ was that *likeness of the serpents* which stung them. This symbol was lifted on a pole, and they were to look to it, and be healed. So Jesus was made in the *likeness of sinful flesh*. He came as the sin-bearer. . . .” [Cf. Amplification of this symbol by Norman Gulley in *Ministry* June 1985.]

Full quotation:

Consider the incident which Christ presented before Nicodemus in referring to the uplifted serpent. The Lord Jesus had protected the children of Israel from the venomous serpents in the wilderness, but this part of their history they did not know. Angels from heaven had accompanied them, and in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, Christ had been their protection through all their journeyings. But they became selfish and discontented, and in order

that they might not forget his great care over them, the Lord Jesus gave them a bitter lesson. He permitted them to be bitten by the fiery serpents, but in his great mercy he did not leave them to perish. Moses was bidden to make and lift the brazen serpent on the pole, and make the proclamation that whosoever should look upon it should live. And all who looked did live. They recovered health at once. Suppose ye that this life-giving message, the invitation to look upon the representation of Christ, was given in whispered tones? Suppose ye that there were meetings for discussion as to how the symbol of the brazen

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serpent could have any efficacy? Some hesitated, desiring a scientific explanation, but no light was given. They must accept the words given by Christ to Moses. It was proclaimed with the trumpet, and by the leading men of every tribe throughout the encampment. The word obeyed, would bring life and healing. {PH080 48.1}

What a strange symbol of Christ was that *likeness of the serpent* which stung them! This symbol was lifted on a pole and they were to look to it, and be healed. So Jesus was made in the *likeness of sinful flesh. He came as the sin-bearer*. Under the symbol of the uplifted serpent, he was presented before the vast congregation of those who were entrusted with sacred truth. It was God's purpose that when Christ should appear in person, men might recognize his mission, and cooperate with him in the saving of humanity. He was crucified at one of the yearly gatherings of the Jews, when representatives from all nations were present at Jerusalem. The knowledge of the cruel work done to Jesus was to go to the remotest regions of the inhabited world. The message, Look and live, was given in the most decided manner. {PH080 49.1}

The same healing, life-giving message is now sounding. It means hope, courage, faith, pardon, and life. *It points to the Saviour, uplifted on the shameful tree. Those who have been bitten by the old serpent, the devil, are bidden to look and live.* {PH080 49.2} [similar to {1888 1451.2}]

Here was ground with which Nicodemus was familiar. The symbol of the uplifted serpent made plain to him the Saviour's mission. When the people of Israel were dying from the sting of the fiery serpents, God directed Moses to make a serpent of brass, and place it on high in the midst of the congregation. Then the word was sounded throughout the encampment that all who would look upon the serpent should live. The people well knew that in itself the serpent had no power to help them. It was a symbol of Christ. *As the image made in the likeness of the*

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destroying serpents was lifted up for their healing, so One made "in the likeness of sinful flesh" was to be their Redeemer. Rom. 8:3. Many of the Israelites regarded the sacrificial service as having in itself virtue to set them free from sin. God desired to teach them that it had no more value than that serpent of brass. It was to lead their minds to the Saviour. Whether for the healing of their wounds or the pardon of their sins, they could do nothing for themselves but show their faith in the Gift of God. They were to look and live. {DA 174.4}

You are to die to self, to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. You need not devise ways and methods of bringing about your own crucifixion; self-inflicted penances are of no avail, and will be found worthless when the test comes upon you. We are to surrender the heart to God, that he may renew and sanctify us, and fit us for his heavenly courts. We are not to wait for some special time, but today we are to give ourselves to him, refusing to be the servants of sin. Do you

imagine that you can leave off sin by your own human power a little at a time? You cannot do this; *Jesus was treated as a sinner when he assumed the likeness of sinful flesh, that the sinner might be treated as righteous*. The Father loves us who believe in Christ as he loves his only-begotten Son. Thus by faith we can grasp the righteousness of Christ, and our Saviour saves us from all sin. {ST, August 8, 1892 par. 2}

Jesus, the Spotless and Pure, was treated as a sinner when He was found in the likeness of sinful flesh, in order that the believing and repentant sinner might be treated as righteous. As the light of truth should come to the soul, revealing the sacred, holy, immutable character of the law, the believer was to place his feet in the path of obedience. Thus was he to be justified and sanctified. {14MR 84.2}

Christ became sin for the fallen race, in taking upon himself the condemnation resting upon the sinner for his transgression of the law of God. Christ stood at the head of the human family as their representative. He had taken upon himself the sins of the world. In the likeness of sinful flesh he condemned sin in the flesh. He recognized the claims of the Jewish law until his death, when type met antitype. In the miracle he performed for the leper, he bade him go to the priests with an offering in accordance with the law of Moses. Thus he sanctioned the law requiring offerings. {RH, May 6, 1875 par. 11}

2. “Likeness” means “similar but also unique” in the sense of “human, as well as divine”: (support for part of no. 5 above, but not necessarily supportive of “fallen human nature”)

He did not come to our world as an angel of glory, but *as a man. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh. With his human arm he encircled the race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the infinite, linked man with God, and earth with heaven*. Oh, who are there who are collaborators with Christ, who are feeding the starving flock of God? {ST, April 16, 1894 par. 5}

Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, clothing his divinity with humanity, in order that he might bring before the world the perfection of God in his own character.

Christ was God, but he did not appear as God. He veiled the tokens of divinity, which had commanded the homage of angels and called forth the adoration of the universe of God. He made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. . . . The eternal Word consented to be made flesh. God became man. {ST, February 20, 1893 par. 7-8} (but see full quotation below, under no. 3, for support for another position as well).

God has given to the world and to angels the evidence of the changeless character of His love. He would part with His only begotten Son, *send Him into the world, clothed in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin and to die upon Calvary's cross* to make it manifest to men that there is provision in the counsels of heaven for those who believe in Christ, to keep the commandments of God. Aside from Christ, man cannot in spirit and in truth keep one of the

commandments of God, but in Christ Jesus the claims of the law are met, because He transforms the nature of man by His grace, creates in the heart a new spiritual life, implants a holy nature, Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His

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nature might overcome. *Made "in the likeness of sinful flesh"* (Rom. 8:3), He lived a sinless life. Now *by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us*. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our "Father which is in heaven is perfect." {DA 311.5} and men become Christlike in character. {14MR 86.1}

3. "Likeness" as "similar but also unique" in the sense that He took the (innocent) "infirmities" and "habiliments" of sinful flesh, but not the "taint" of sin (= sinful propensities?) (=view no. 2 above)

We are compassed with the *infirmities of humanity*. So also was Christ. That He might by His own example condemn sin in the flesh, He took upon Himself the *likeness of sinful flesh*.--Ms 125, 1901, p. 14. {17MR 28.2}

Christ, the second Adam, *came in the likeness of sinful flesh. In man's behalf, He became subject to sorrow, to weariness, to hunger, and to thirst. He was subject to*

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temptation, but He yielded not to sin. No taint of sin was upon Him. He declared, "I have kept my Father's commandments [in My earthly life]" (John 15:10). He had infinite power only because He was perfectly obedient to His Father's will. The second Adam stood the test of trial and temptation that He might become the Owner of all humanity.--Manuscript 99, 1903. (3 SM 142-4.

Christ's life represents a perfect manhood. *Just that which you may be, He was in human nature. He took our infirmities. He was not only made flesh, but He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. His divine attributes were withheld from relieving His soul anguish or His bodily pains* (Letter 106, 1896). {5BC 1124.2}

The Redeemer of the world *clothed his divinity with humanity, that he might reach humanity*; for, in order to bring to the world salvation, it was necessary that humanity and divinity should be united. Divinity needed humanity, that humanity might afford a channel of communication between God and man, and humanity needed divinity, that a power from above might restore man to the likeness of God. *Christ was God, but he did not appear as God. He veiled the tokens of divinity, which had commanded the homage of angels and called forth the adoration of the universe of God. He made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh*. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. {ST, February 20, 1893 par. 7}

He humbled himself to pass through man's experiences, and he would not turn aside from the plan by which salvation could come to man. Knowing all the steps in the path of his humiliation, he refused not to descend step by step to the depths of man's woe, that he might make expiation for the sins of the condemned, perishing world. What humility was this! It amazed the angels. Tongue can never describe it. Pen can never portray it. The imagination cannot take it in. Sinless and exalted by nature, the Son of God consented to take the habiliments of humanity, to become one with the fallen race. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh. God became man. {ST, February 20, 1893 par. 8}

It should be to us a cause of continual gratitude and rejoicing that Jesus knows our weakness and is acquainted with our temptations. We are too much in the habit of thinking that the Son of God was a being so entirely exalted above us that it is an impossibility for him to enter into our trials and temptations, and that he can have *no sympathy with us in our weakness and frailties*. This is because we do not take in the fact of *his oneness with humanity. He took upon him the likeness of sinful flesh, and was made in all points like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God*. He has engaged himself to save every son and daughter of Adam who will consent to be saved in God's appointed way. {ST, May 16, 1895 par. 7}

"Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." This record of the childhood and youth of Jesus is to be an encouragement to all children and youth. Jesus is the perfect pattern, and it is the duty and privilege of every child and youth to copy the pattern. Let children bear in mind that the child *Jesus had taken upon himself human nature, and was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was tempted of Satan as all children are tempted*. He was able to resist the temptations of Satan through his dependence upon the divine power of his heavenly Father, as he was subject to his will, and obedient to all his commands. He kept his father's statutes, precepts, and laws. He was continually seeking counsel of God, and was obedient to his will. {YI, August 23, 1894 par. 1}

Adam was tempted by the enemy, and he fell. *It was not indwelling sin which caused him to yield; for God made him pure and upright, in His own image. He was as faultless as the angels before the throne. There were in him no corrupt principles, no tendencies to evil. But when Christ came to meet the temptations of Satan, He bore "the likeness of sinful flesh." In the wilderness, weakened physically by a fast of forty days, He met the adversary*. His dignity was questioned, His authority disputed, His allegiance to His Father assailed by the fallen foe. {BEcho, September 3, 1900 par. 10}

All heaven watched the conflict between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. Angels stood ready to interpose in Christ's behalf should Satan pass the prescribed limit. Oh, what love burned in their hearts as they saw their Commander apparently in the power of His foe. When the last temptation came, when as Satan offered Christ all the world and the glory of it, if He would fall down and worship him, *divinity flashed through humanity*, and the enemy was resisted, the love of the angels knew no bounds. Their sympathy could no longer be restrained. {BEcho, September 3, 1900 par. 11}

“And for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (8:3):

“That is, on account of the punishment of sin which He bore for us, or through the merit of His (*bearing our*) sin, which was not in His flesh, but which He took upon Himself, so far as our punishment in the flesh was concerned, (*God destroyed the power of sin that was ours*).”

Luthere’s *Commentary on Romans* (abridged), 119.

“For sin”: “*peri hamartias* was the usual LXX rendering of the Hebrew for ‘sin offering’ in Leviticus and Numbers, and should clearly be translated ‘sin offering’ in Hebrews 10:6, 8 and 13:11. And since the sin offering was prescribed specially for the atoning of ‘unwilling sins’, which is exactly what the sins of Romans 7 are (‘I do what I do not want to do’, 20), Tom Wright concludes, ‘There can no longer be any room for doubt that when Paul wrote *kai peri hamartias* he meant the words to carry their regular biblical overtones, *i.e.* “and as a sin offering”’. [Wright, 220 ff.]. In any case, ‘in the likeness of sinful flesh’ is clearly an allusion to the incarnation, and ‘to be a sin offering’ to the atonement.” John Stott, *Romans*, 220.

Jesus came in the *likeness of sinful flesh, by a pure and holy life to condemn sin in the flesh*. He came to our world to represent the character of God, and it is our work to represent the character of Christ. If we have lost His love out of our hearts, our work is to seek the Lord, that our hearts may be renewed by His Holy Spirit. {15MR 300.4}

Christ became sin for the fallen race, in taking upon himself the condemnation resting upon the sinner for his transgression of the law of God. Christ stood at the head of the human family as their representative. He had taken upon himself the sins of the world. In the likeness of sinful flesh he condemned sin in the flesh. He recognized the claims of the Jewish law until his death, when type met antitype. In the miracle he performed for the leper, he bade him go to the priests with an offering in accordance with the law of Moses. Thus he sanctioned the law requiring offerings. {RH, May 6, 1875 par. 11}

Jesus came to *condemn sin in the flesh, to bear the curse of sin for us*; and he took the law from beneath the feet of those who were trampling upon it, and made it honorable. He kept his Father's commandments; and only by being a partaker of the divine nature, can man keep them. {RH, September 15, 1896 par. 6}

In human flesh He lived the law of God, that He might condemn sin in the flesh, and bear witness to heavenly intelligences that the law was ordained to life and to ensure the happiness, peace, and eternal good of all who obey. But the same infinite sacrifice that is life to those who believe is a testimony of condemnation to the disobedient, speaking death and not life (MS 29, 1899). {7BC 915.3}

Jesus got tired (John 4:6; Mark 4:37, 38), hungry and thirsty (John 4:7, 8; 19:28)

Heb 2:14: “Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of [shared, *metecho*], the same, that through death He might render powerless him

who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” “flesh and blood” = human [before glorification] (see Matt 16:17; 1 Cor 15:50; Gal 1:16; Eph 6:12;

Other Biblical references to Jesus as human:

OT messianic prophecies: Messiah as “Son” (Ps 2:7, 12; Isa 7:14 and 9:6), “Man” (Isa 53:3), or “Son of Man” (Ps 8:4–6; Dan 7:13). Cf. Jesus’ numerous references to Himself as “son of Man” (Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:26; Luke 21:27; + over 80 more times)

John 8:40; 7:46; 19:5; 1 Tim 2:5; Acts 2:22;

Matt 1:18–25: human mother

Luke 2:40, 52: submitted Himself to the ordinary laws of human development

The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, "even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations." It is the great and profound mystery of Godliness. . . . {7ABC 449.1}

Christ did not make believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent.--The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906. {7ABC 449.2}

He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He *assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature.* In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God.--The Signs of the Times, Aug. 2, 1905. {7ABC 449.3}

Satan had pointed to Adam's sin as proof that God's law was unjust, and could not be obeyed. In our humanity, Christ was to redeem Adam's failure. But when Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. *For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity.* Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation. {DA 117.1}

Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But *our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man,*

with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured.-- The Desire of Ages, p. 117. {7ABC 449.4 partial}

Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the *weaknesses of fallen man upon Him*, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed.--The Review and Herald, July 28, 1874. {7ABC 449.5}

Jesus was *in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God.* He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours.--The Desire of Ages, p. 311. {7ABC 449.6}

As one with us, He must bear the burden of our guilt and woe. *The Sinless One must feel the shame of sin. . . . Every sin, every discord, every defiling lust that transgression had brought, was torture to His spirit.*--The Desire of Ages, p. 111. {7ABC 450.1}

The *weight of the sins of the world was pressing His soul*, and His countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized. *He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and of unholy passion that controlled the world.*--The Review and Herald, Aug. 4, 1874. {7ABC 450.2}

Entire justice was done in the atonement. *In the place of the sinner, the spotless Son of God received the penalty, and the sinner goes free as long as he receives and holds Christ as his personal Saviour.* Though guilty, he is looked upon as innocent. Christ fulfilled every requirement demanded by justice.--The Youth's Instructor, April 25, 1901. {7ABC 450.3}

Guiltless, He bore the punishment of the guilty. Innocent, yet offering Himself as a substitute for the transgressor. *The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer.*--The Signs of the Times, Dec. 5, 1892. {7ABC 450.4}

He *took upon his sinless nature our sinful nature*, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted.--Medical Ministry, p. 181. {7ABC 450.5}

Christ bore the guilt of the sins of the world. Our sufficiency is found only in the incarnation and death of the Son of God. He could suffer, because sustained by divinity. He could endure, because *He was without one taint of disloyalty or sin.*--The Youth's Instructor, Aug. 4, 1898. {7ABC 451.4}

He [Christ] *took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race.*--The Review and Herald, July 28, 1874. {7ABC 452.1}

It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But *Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity.* What these results were is shown in the

history of His earthly ancestors. He came with *such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations*, and to give us the example of a sinless life. {7ABC 452.2}

Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners. Yet into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, *subject to the weakness of humanity*. He permitted Him to *meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss*.-- The Desire of Ages, p. 49. {7ABC 452.3}

Wondrous combination of man and God! *He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. . . . God became man!*--The Review and Herald, Sept. 4, 1900. {7ABC 452.4}

Clad in the *vestments of humanity*, the Son of God *came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. Clothing His divinity with humanity*, that He might associate with fallen humanity, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world. In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God.--The Review and Herald, Dec. 15, 1896. {7ABC 452.6}

He for our sakes laid aside His royal robe, stepped down from the throne in heaven, and condescended to *clothe His divinity with humility, and became like one of us except in sin*, that His life and character should be a pattern for all to copy, that they might have the precious gift of eternal life.--The Youth's Instructor, Oct. 20, 1886. {7ABC 453.1}

As the sin bearer, and priest and representative of man before God, *He entered into the life of humanity, bearing our flesh and blood*. The life is in the living, vital current of blood, which blood was given for the life of the world. Christ made a full atonement, giving His life as a ransom for us. *He was born without a taint of sin, but came into the world in like manner as the human family. He did not have a mere semblance of a body, but He took human nature, participating in the life of humanity*. --Letter 97, 1898. 7BC 925 {7ABC 453.2 partial}

Harmless and undefiled, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous.--The Desire of Ages, p. 90. {7ABC 453.3}

Christ, *who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition*. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He stooped to poverty and to the deepest abasement among men.--The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1898. {7ABC 453.4} = AG 165

Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the *humiliation of taking upon himself our fallen nature*, the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal.--The Desire of Ages, p. 112. {7ABC 453.5}

Though He had no taint of sin upon His character, yet He condescended to *connect our fallen human nature with His divinity. By thus taking humanity, He honored humanity. Having taken our fallen nature*, He showed what it might become, by accepting the ample provision He has

made for it, and by becoming partaker of the divine nature.--Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office, and the Work in Battle Creek, May 26, 1896, p. 13. {7ABC 453.6}

He [Paul] directs the mind first to the position which Christ occupied in heaven, in the bosom of His Father; he reveals Him afterward as laying off His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to all the *humbling conditions of man's nature*, assuming the responsibilities of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, and that death the most ignominious and revolting, the most shameful, the most agonizing--the death of the cross.-- Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 458. {7ABC 453.7}

The angels prostrated themselves before Him. They offered their lives. Jesus said to them that He would by His death save many, that the life of an angel could not pay the debt. His life alone could be accepted of His Father as a ransom for man. Jesus also told them that they would have a part to act, to be with Him and at different times strengthen Him; that *He would take man's fallen nature, and His strength would not be even equal with theirs*; that they would be witnesses of His humiliation and great sufferings.--Early Writings, p. 150. {7ABC 454.1}

D. Jesus was born holy, sinless, without a taint of, or bent to, corruption. He did not possess the passions of our human fallen natures. He had no innate or cultivated propensities of disobedience. His human nature was characterized by perfect sinlessness. He took the lessened capacity of the sinful nature (*affected by sin*) but not the tendencies or propensities of the sinful nature (not *infected with sin*).

Exod 12:5: "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats."

Luke 1:35: "And the angel answered and said to her, '*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*'"

John 8:29: "The Father has not left me alone; for I do always those things that please Him."

John 8:46: "Which of you convicts Me of sin?"

John 14: 30: "for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has [*echo*] nothing in me." [no power or point of contact]

2 Cor 5:21: "He who knew no sin"

Heb 4:15: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin."

Heb 7:26: "For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

1 Pet 1:19: "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

1 John 3:5: "In Him there is no sin"

Jesus' as *monogenes*: "one of a kind!" Unique as human Son, as well as divine Son [see N. Gulley *Ministry* June 85]

In the fullness of time He was to be revealed in human form. *He was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man.* In heaven was heard the voice, "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."--The Signs of the Times, May 29, 1901. {7ABC 447.1}

In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He "knew no sin." He was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot." Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour's head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. . . . We should have no misgivings in regard to the *perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.*--ST June 9, 1898; The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1131. {7ABC 447.3}

Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. *Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin.* He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but *not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.*--5BC 1128. {7ABC 447.4}

The Son of God humbled Himself and took man's nature after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. Sin had been making its terrible marks upon the race for ages; and physical, mental, and moral degeneracy prevailed throughout the human family. When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. . . . Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure.--The Review and Herald, July 28, 1874. {7ABC 448.1}

Avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God. . . . *Never, in any way, leave the slightest*

impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called "that holy thing." It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain, a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be.--The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, pp. 1128, 1129. {7ABC 448.2} [= The Baker Letter]

[Note: these "propensities of disobedience" or "evil propensities" that other humans have but Jesus did not, are refer to predilections, proclivities or bents or inclinations to sin, not the actual participation in a sinful act.]

The human nature of Christ is likened to ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for His *spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin*. Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience. . . . {7ABC 449.7}

The Son of God endured the wrath of God against sin. All the accumulated sin of the world was laid upon the Sin-bearer, the One who was innocent, the One who alone could be the propitiation for sin, because He Himself was obedient. He was One with God. *Not a taint of corruption was upon Him*.--The Signs of the Times, Dec. 9, 1897. {7ABC 449.8}

Christ's perfect humanity is the same that man may have through connection with Christ. As God, Christ could not be tempted any more than He was not

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tempted from His allegiance in heaven. But as Christ humbled Himself to the nature of man, He could be tempted. He had not taken on Him even the nature of the angels, but *humanity, perfectly identical with our own nature, except without the taint of sin*. A human body, a human mind, with all the peculiar properties, He was bone, brain, and muscle. A man of our flesh, He was compassed with the weakness of humanity. The circumstances of His life were of that character that He was exposed to all the inconveniences that belong to men, not in wealth, not in ease, but in poverty and want and humiliation. He breathed the very air man must breathe. He trod our earth as man. He had reason, conscience, memory, will, and affections of the human soul which was united with His divine nature. {16MR 181.4}

Just before his cruel death, Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain a victory. He had kept his Father's commandments; and *there was no sin in him that Satan could triumph over, no weakness or defect that he could use to his advantage. But we are sinful by nature, and we have a work to do to cleanse the soul-temple of every defilement*. Let us improve this precious privilege to confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed. Let hearts sympathize with hearts; let love be without dissimulation. Put away sin; bruise Satan under your feet. Leave your weakness behind you, and, strong in the grace of Christ, press on to victory. {RH, May 27, 1884 par. 11}

Amid impurity, Christ *maintained His purity. Satan could not stain or corrupt it.* His character revealed a perfect hatred for sin. It was His holiness that stirred against Him all the passion of a profligate world; for by His perfect life He threw upon the world a perpetual reproach, and made manifest the contrast between transgression and the *pure spotless righteousness of One that knew no sin.*--The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1142. {7ABC 454.2}

In his humanity *Christ was tried with as much greater temptation, with as much more persevering energy than man is tried by the evil one, as his nature was greater than man's.* This is a deep mysterious truth, that Christ is bound to humanity by the most sensitive sympathies. The evil works, the evil thoughts, the evil words of every son and daughter of Adam press upon his divine soul. The sins of men called for retribution upon himself; for he had become man's substitute, and took upon him the sins of the world. He bore the sins of every sinner; for all transgressions were imputed unto him, though "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Though the guilt of sin was not his, his Spirit was torn and bruised by the transgressions of men. {RH, December 20, 1892 par. 7}

Our Lord was tempted as man is tempted. He was capable of yielding to temptations, as are human beings. His finite nature was pure and spotless, but the divine nature that led Him to say to Philip, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" also, was not humanized; neither was humanity deified by the blending or union of the two natures; each retained its essential character and properties. {16MR 182.1}

But here we must not become in our ideas common and earthly, and *in our perverted ideas we must not think that the liability of Christ to yield to Satan's temptations degraded His humanity and He possessed the same sinful, corrupt propensities as man.* {16MR 182.2}

The divine nature, combined with the human, made Him capable of yielding to Satan's temptations. Here the test to Christ was far greater than that of Adam and Eve, for *Christ took our nature, fallen but not corrupted,* and would not be corrupted unless He received the words of Satan in the place of the words of

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God. To suppose He was not capable of yielding to temptation places Him where He cannot be a perfect example for man, and the force and the power of this part of Christ's humiliation, which is the most eventful, is no instruction or help to human beings. {16MR 182.3}

But the facts of this history are not fable, but a living, acting, experience. [To deny this] would rob Jesus of His greatest glory--allegiance to God--which enshrouded Him as a garment in this world on the field of battle with the relentless foe, and He is not reckoned with the transgressor. He descended in His humiliation to be tempted as man would be tempted, and His nature was that of man, capable of yielding to temptation. His very purity and holiness were assailed by a fallen foe, the very one that became corrupted and then was ejected from heaven. How deeply and keenly must Christ have felt this humiliation. {16MR 183.1}

Through being partakers of the divine nature we may stand pure and holy and undefiled. The Godhead was not made human, and the human was not deified by the blending together of the two natures. *Christ did not possess the same sinful, corrupt, fallen disloyalty we possess, for then He could not be a perfect offering.*--Manuscript 94, 1893. {3SM 131.1}

It is not correct to say, as many writers have said, that Christ was like all children. *He was not like all children.* Many children are misguided and mismanaged. But Joseph, and especially Mary, kept before them the remembrance of their child's divine Fatherhood. Jesus was instructed in accordance with the sacred character of His mission. *His*

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inclination to right was a constant gratification to His parents. The questions He asked them led them to study most earnestly the great elements of truth. His soul-stirring words about nature and the God of nature opened and enlightened their minds. {5BC 1116.7}

On the rocks and knolls about His home the eye of the Son of God often rested. He was familiar with the things of nature. He saw the sun in the heavens, the moon and the stars fulfilling their mission. With the voice of singing He welcomed the morning light. He listened to the lark caroling forth music to its God, and joined His voice with the voice of praise and thanksgiving. . . . {5BC 1117.1}

[Luke 2:40 quoted.] He was an example of what all children may strive to be if parents will seek the Lord most earnestly, and if children will cooperate with their parents. In His words and actions He manifested tender sympathy for all. His companionship was as a healing, soothing balm to the disheartened and depressed. {5BC 1117.2}

No one, looking upon the childlike countenance, shining with animation, could say that Christ was just like other children. He was God in human flesh. When urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong. It was this keen discrimination between right and wrong that often provoked Christ's brothers to anger. Yet His appeals and entreaties, and the sorrow expressed in His countenance, revealed such a tender, earnest love for them that they were ashamed of having tempted Him to deviate from His strict sense of justice and loyalty (YI Sept. 8, 1898). {5BC 1117.3}

What opposites meet and are revealed in the person of Christ! The mighty God, yet a helpless child! The Creator of all the world, yet, in a world of His creating, often hungry and weary, and without a place to lay His head! The Son of man, yet infinitely higher than the angels! Equal with the Father, yet *His divinity clothed with humanity, standing at the head of the fallen race*, that human beings might be placed on vantage-ground! Possessing eternal riches, yet living the life of a poor man! *One with the Father in dignity and power, yet in His humanity tempted in all points like as we are tempted!* In the very moment of His dying agony on the cross, a Conqueror, answering the request of the repentant sinner to be remembered by Him when He came into His kingdom.--The Signs of the Times, April 26, 1905. {7ABC 448.3}

We should have no misgivings in regard to the *perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.* Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be enshrouded in darkness. This *holy substitute* is able to save to the uttermost; for He presented to the wondering universe perfect and complete humility in His human character, and perfect obedience to all the requirements of God.--The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1898. {7ABC 454.3}

With His human arm, Christ encircled the race, while with His divine arm, He grasped the

throne of the Infinite, uniting finite man with the infinite God. He bridged the gulf that sin had made, and connected earth with heaven. In *His human nature He maintained the purity of His divine character.*--The Youth's Instructor, June 2, 1898. {7ABC 454.4}

He was *unsullied with corruption*, a stranger to sin; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings, which are so common with humanity. *He was a mighty petitioner, not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points like as we are.* Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father.-- Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 508. {7ABC 454.5}

He is a *brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil.* He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world.--2T 202. {7ABC 455.1}

His doctrine dropped as the rain; His speech distilled as the dew. In the character of Christ was blended such majesty as God had never before displayed to fallen man, and such meekness as man had never developed. Never before had there walked among men one so noble, so pure, so benevolent, so conscious of His godlike nature; yet so simple, so full of plans and purposes to do good to humanity. While abhorring sin, He wept with compassion over the sinner. He pleased not Himself. The majesty of heaven clothed Himself with the humility of a child. This is the character of Christ.--5T 422. {7ABC 455.2}

The life of Jesus was a life in harmony with God. While He was a child, He thought and spoke as a child; but *no trace of sin marred the image of God within Him.* Yet He was not exempt from temptation. . . . Jesus was placed where His character would be tested. It was necessary for Him to be constantly on guard in order to preserve His purity. He was subject to all the conflicts which we have to meet, that He might be an example to us in childhood, youth, and manhood.--The Desire of Ages, p. 71. {7ABC 455.3}

Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and *undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish.* The extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the Majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race.--The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 2, pp. 11, 12. {7ABC 456.1}

Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,--deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Isa. 1:5, 6. But Jesus, *coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution.* His presence has healing virtue for the sinner.--The Desire of Ages, p. 266. {7ABC 456.2}

Jesus looked for a moment upon the scene,--the trembling victim in her shame, the hard-faced

dignitaries, devoid of even human pity. His *spirit of stainless purity* shrank from the spectacle. Well He knew for what purpose this case had been brought to Him. He read the heart, and knew the character and life history of everyone in His presence. . . . The accusers had been defeated. Now, their robe of pretended holiness torn from them, they stood, guilty and condemned, in the presence of *Infinite Purity*.—DA 461. {7ABC 456.3}

E. Jesus was tempted “in all points like us” (Heb 4:15)

Heb 4:15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.”

1. Basic points of temptation: 1 John 2:16—“the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life.”

2. These same points were encountered by Eve in Eden (Gen 3:), when she did not have a sinful nature! Jesus met these same three points in the wilderness (Matt 4).

3. Basic issue in all temptation: take oneself out of the Father’s hands, and act independently. (Gen 3; Matt 4).

Christ alone had experience in all the sorrows and temptations that befall human beings. Never another of woman born was so fiercely beset by temptation; never another bore so heavy a burden of the world’s sin and pain. Never was there another whose sympathies were so broad or so tender. *A sharer in all the experiences of humanity*, He could feel not only for, but with, every burdened and tempted and struggling one.--Education, p. 78. {7ABC 450.6}

God was in Christ in human form, and *endured all the temptations wherewith man was beset; in our behalf He participated in the suffering and trials of sorrowful human nature*.--The Watchman, Dec. 10, 1907. {7ABC 450.7}

He "was in all points tempted like as we are." Satan stood ready to assail Him at every step, hurling at Him his fiercest temptations; yet He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." "*He . . . suffered being tempted, suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness.*" But the prince of darkness found nothing in Him; not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 422. {7ABC 450.8}

Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, "Christ suffered, being tempted." While He was free from the taint of sin, the refined sensibilities of His holy nature rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to him. Yet with human nature upon Him, He met the arch-apostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of His throne. Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foot-hold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." The storms of temptation burst upon Him, but they could not cause Him to swerve from His allegiance to God.--The Review and Herald, Nov. 8, 1887. {7ABC 451.1}

I perceive that there is danger in approaching subjects which dwell on the humanity of the Son

of the infinite God. He did humble Himself when He saw He was in fashion as a man, that He might *understand the force of all temptations wherewith man is beset*. . . . On not one occasion was there a response to his manifold temptations. Not once did Christ step on Satan's ground, to give him any advantage. Satan found nothing in Him to encourage his advances.--The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1129. {7ABC 451.2}

Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured. . . . In man's behalf, Christ conquered by enduring the severest test. For our sake He exercised a self-control stronger than hunger or death.--The Desire of Ages, p. 117. {7ABC 451.3}

Christ overcame Satan *on every point*. The wily foe *could not induce Him to swerve from His allegiance to the Father*. "Get thee behind Me, Satan," Christ said; "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." The Captain of our salvation overcame for us; Satan left the field a conquered foe. But the strain upon Christ had left Him as one dead. "And, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." Their arms encircled Him. Upon the breast of the highest angel in heaven His head rested. Divine consolation flowed into His soul. The foe was vanquished. Humanity was placed on vantage ground. Christ had conquered. Those who became partakers of the divine nature would be able to resist the temptations of the enemy. {BEcho, September 3, 1900 par. 12}

[Jesus' temptation was from the divine side as well as the human:]

It was a difficult task for the Prince of life to carry out the plan which He had undertaken for the salvation of man, in clothing His divinity with humanity. He had received honor in the heavenly courts, and was familiar with absolute power. *It was as difficult for Him to keep the level of humanity as for men to rise above the low level of their depraved natures, and be partakers of the divine nature.* {7BC 930.1}

Christ was put to the closest test, requiring the strength of all His faculties to resist the inclination when in danger, to use His power to deliver Himself from peril, and triumph over the power of the prince of darkness. Satan showed his knowledge of the weak points of the human heart, and put forth his utmost power to take advantage of the weakness of the humanity which Christ had assumed in order to overcome his temptations on man's account. RH April 1, 1875; {7BC 930.2}

F. Jesus was tempted as Adam and Eve were tempted in Eden (by Satan appealing to His uncorrupted, non-depraved appetites and passions, not from innate or cultivated propensities/cravings/tendencies of evil within Him).

Matt 4: Satan's temptations in the wilderness, paralleling Eve's temptations in Eden, when she had no innate or cultivated propensities of evil (Gen 3)

John 14:30: “for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.”

When Christ bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan's kingdom with Him to the earth. He *vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory*. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour's Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power.--The Youth's Instructor, April 25, 1901. {7ABC 447.2}

Christ came to the earth, taking humanity, and *standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement*.--The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1898. {7ABC 446.3}

Christ is called the second Adam. In purity and holiness, connected with God and beloved by God, He *began where the first Adam began. Willingly He passed over the ground where Adam fell, and redeemed Adam's failure*.--The Youth's Instructor, June 2, 1898. {7ABC 446.4}

He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, *as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden*.--5 BC, p. 1128. {7ABC 447.4}

G. Jesus will retain His human nature forever.

In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. . . . *In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken*. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, *forever to retain His human nature*. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven.--DA 25. {7ABC 456.4}

H. “Took” / “partook” vs. “have” / “became” / “possess”

Heb 2:14:

Hebrews 2:14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken [*koinoneo*, “have a share of”] of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared [*metecho*, “to partake of, share in”, lit. “have with”] in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” NKJV

Note: “partake of” is equivalent to “have [with]” in this passage! Christ partook of, and *had* a human nature of flesh and blood

John 1:14– “The Word *was made* flesh, and dwelt among us.” (KJV)

“The Word *became* flesh, and dwelt among us.” (NKJV, NASB, and most others)

[Note that *ginomai* can mean “be made” or “become” [the latter is preferred for this passage in BGAD: “to experience a change in nature and so indicate entry into a new condition, *become someth.*”]

The Son of God stooped to uplift the fallen. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth to be "wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities." Isaiah 53:5. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. *He became flesh, even as we are.* He knew what it meant to be hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He was a stranger and a sojourner on the earth--in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women of today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God. "The Word *was made flesh*, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth." John 1:14. AA 473

[Note that EGW uses both meanings--“be made” and “become”!]

Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. *The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man!* It was a wonderful humility. {5BC 1127.2}

Christ did not make believe *take human nature; He did verily take it.* He did in reality *possess human nature.* "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. 2: 14). He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the Man Christ Jesus. "This man," writes Paul, "was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb. 3:3). {1SM 247.1}

Note that Christ's human nature also “partook” of the divine nature:

He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. *In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature.* In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God.--The Signs of the Times, Aug. 2, 1905. {7ABC 449.3}

I. Similarities [Identity] to and Differences [Uniqueness] from our fallen nature

Summary: Christ was enough like us to identify with our “infirmities” in our struggle with temptation, but enough different than us to be able to offer Himself as a sinless, substitutionary sacrifice.

Christ’s Human Nature Compared with Ours and Adam’s

Similarities (Identity): Like Us	Differences (Uniqueness): Like Adam
Affected by Sin	Not infected with sin
(Innocent) infirmities	No evil, corrupt, depraved, propensities (inherited or cultivated), inclinations, bent, tendencies, or passions to sin
Diminished power	Not deranged powers
Weakened (5 BC 1128)	Not wicked
Feeble	Not faulty
Liabilities	Not sinful tendencies (inclination to corruption)
Deteriorated (AG 165)	Not depraved
Self-denial	Not selfishness
Fallen (16 MR 182)	Not corrupted (16 MR 182); not vile, depraved; no pollution, depravity, or corruption
Sinful nature (lessened capacity): weak, frail, degraded, degenerate, deteriorated, wretched, defiled	No sinfulness; no taint of sin; no inclination to corruption, or yielding to corruption, or evil propensity; no inbred sin; no rebellious will;
Human passions (5 BC 1130; ST 21 Nov 1899)	No sinful passions (2T 201, 508) or desires
Lower nature with appetites and passions	Lower nature but no perverted appetites and passions (“fleshly lusts”; MS 47, 1896), not a “corrupt nature” (AA 127)
Susceptibilities (possibility of being tempted)	No natural bent to sin
Bodily wants (5 BC 1130)	Not perverted bodily wants

