

THE COMPLETENESS OF CHRIST'S ASSUMED HUMANITY

Review

1. In our previous study, we discovered that the Father prepared a (human) body for Jesus to be offered up as a sin offering to replace of the animal sacrifices which could not take away sin (**Heb 10:5-10**)
2. In that same chapter we learned that the Father had no pleasure with animal sacrifices even though they were offered continuously simply because they could not fulfill His will—that is, to take away sin **DA 48** says that Jesus “accepted the results of the workings of the great law of heredity”
3. How much of Adam’s fallen heredity did He actually accept? Did He accept the whole package or just parts of it?
- 4.
5. Jesus was to be the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world (**John 1:29**)
6. Regarding the nature of the (human) body that the Father prepared for His Son for a sin offering, we are told in **Rom 8:3** that it essentially was the likeness of sinful flesh, not sinless flesh
7. “Sin in the flesh” in Christ’s assumed humanity would be taken away in fulfillment of the Father’s will by offering it up as sacrifice and therefore executing the sentence of death upon it
8. No other flesh or nature aside from sinful flesh could be more appropriate for the job since the law condemns sinful human flesh and requires its total annihilation
 - a. **REMEMBER:** the law does not condemn sinless human nature and has no claims on it as there is no sin in it to condemn
9. Therefore, if Jesus had come in a body other than sinful flesh, His sacrifice would have been an invalid, incorrect sacrifice at the get-go
 - a. It would have been a sacrifice the law never demanded to be offered as there is no sin in that flesh that needs condemning and executing
10. If Jesus came with a humanity other than sinful nature, His sacrifice would have been no better than the animal sacrifices that were offered continually yet could not take away sin
11. In **Gen 4:5**, we are told that the Father had no pleasure with Cain’s sacrifice because it was the wrong sacrifice
12. Likewise, if Jesus came in the likeness of sinless flesh, His sacrifice at Calvary would have been just as inappropriate and contemptible as that of Cain
13. If Jesus took sinless nature at His incarnation, He would have nothing to offer for sin as High Priest that would be acceptable
14. Again, why was it absolutely necessary for Jesus to come in sinful flesh or sinful nature and no other nature?
 - a. to qualify as our merciful and faithful High priest who is taken from among men and can show compassion to those who are ignorant and out of the way as He Himself is compassed with the same infirmity

- b. to have actually something to offer for sin which was wholly appropriate and acceptable

The Completeness of Christ's Humanity

15. **DA 48** says that Jesus "accepted the results of the workings of the great law of heredity"
16. How much of Adam's fallen heredity did He actually accept? Did He accept the whole package or just parts of it?
17. The question is, how complete was Christ's humanity in terms of the nature He inherited through the great law of heredity?
18. Was Jesus "exempt" as many believe, from inheriting certain liabilities of sinful fallen flesh such as His brethren possess or, did He go all the way?
19. There are those who teach that Jesus took Adam's fallen nature only in the sense that He could be hungry, thirsty and tired, but He took not the **sinfulness** of human nature
20. In other words, Jesus accepted only the **natural** benign propensities of human nature (hunger thirst, fatigue, etc.) but rejected any propensity or tendency that was sinful and offensive in human nature
21. This would mean that Jesus only **partially** accepted the results of the workings of the great law of heredity
22. What does the Bible say?
 - a. **Rom 8:3**—Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and had to contend with "sin in the flesh" or sin in His human nature; therefore, there were elements in His adopted corporate human nature that were "sinful"
23. What does the Spirit of Prophecy say?

Christ did in reality unite the **offending nature** of man with his own sinless nature, because by this act of condescension he would be enabled to pour out his blessings in behalf of the fallen race. **RH July 17, 1900**

He took the **liabilities** of human nature. **5BC 1114; 1SM 226**

Because of sin his posterity was born with **inherent propensities of disobedience**. **5BC 1128**

24. What does **inherent propensities of disobedience** actually mean in the experience of Adam's children? In your experience?
 - a. It means to be born with the natural bent to be self-willed, self-centered, self-gratifying, self-promoting, selfish—the whole 9 yards, all of which make obedience to the will of God virtually impossible
 - b. This is what Paul identified in **Rom 8:3** as "sin in the flesh" or sin in human nature
 - c. In the words of Paul in **Rom 8:7**, it means to be born with a mind or a will that is naturally at enmity with God and not subject to the law of God and indeed neither can be"
25. Is it sinful to be born with "inherent propensities of disobedience?"
 - a. Paul called it "**sin** in the flesh" (**Rom 8:3**)
 - b. **Ps 51:5**—Behold I was brought forth in **iniquity** and in **sin** did my mother conceive me"
26. Why is it sinful? It is sinful because it is opposed to and out of harmony with heaven's principle of self-sacrificing, self-emptying love

27. Does the law condemn it? If it is sinful then the law condemns it, so Yes!
28. Now, the sixty-four-million-dollar question—Was Jesus born with the same “inherent propensities of disobedience as all men are? Or, did He pass on that? Was He exempt?
29. If Jesus never inherited it, then Paul lied when he said in **Rom 8:3** that Jesus came in “the likeness of sinful flesh” and condemned “sin in the flesh”
30. If God sent His Son in the likeness of sinless flesh, then there was no sin in the flesh to contend with and condemn to begin with
31. Ellen White lied as well, when she said that Jesus “accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity and what these results were are seen in the history of His ancestors” (**DA 48**)
32. The truth of the matter is, Jesus allowed Himself to be given a (human) body that was encumbered with the same “inherent propensities of disobedience” as other men are
33. For what purpose?
 - a. so that He can know what it is like experientially to **struggle** against them
 - b. more importantly, so that He can show us how to overcome them and live godly lives in spite of them
34. How can Jesus show us how to obtain the victory over these inherent propensities to disobey and therefore to sin, if He never had them in His human flesh to begin with?
35. And so, like any other child of Adam after the fall, Jesus inherited a human will that was self-centered and naturally not in harmony with the will of God
36. Notice how the Spirit of Prophecy amazingly described the human mind and will Jesus was born with and see if they are different from those of ours

The **human will of Christ** would not have led him to the wilderness of temptation, to fast, and to be tempted of the devil. It would not have led him to endure humiliation, scorn, reproach, suffering, and death. His human nature shrank from all these things as decidedly as ours shrinks from them. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. The contrast between the life and character of Christ and our life and character is painful to contemplate. What did Christ live to do? It was the will of his heavenly Father. Christ left us an example, that we should follow in his steps. . . **ST October 29, 1894**

37. Like every fallen child of humanity, Jesus had to struggle and wrestle against these inherited propensities to go against the will of His Father
38. Naturally this produced a tremendous amount of suffering
 - a. He suffered being tempted (**Heb 2:18**)
 - b. As captain of our salvation He was made perfect through suffering (**Heb 2:10**)
39. At the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus had to subdue His rebellious, uncooperative human will to the point that blood poured out of His pores like sweat
 - a. “My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me unless I drink it, **Your will** be done.”
Matt 26:42
40. And so, what did Jesus do with the rebellious self-centered human will He was born with?
41. **Phil 2:5** says, let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. . .
42. What was the mind of Christ like?

- a. The mind that says “Not my will but your will be done”
- b. The mind that crucifies the sinful carnal self (MB 14)

Christ emptied Himself and in all that He did, self did not appear” **MB 14**

43. This is the example Jesus left us to do

Paradigm Shift on the Nature of Christ

44. Now, let’s look at some history. . .

45. It used to be that our church held on to the position that Jesus took the sinful, fallen nature of Adam at His incarnation

46. Our pioneers, guided by the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy took the **Post-lapsarian** or **Post-fall** view of the human nature of Christ

- a. This view accepts the biblical position that Jesus was made in all things like unto His brethren” (**Heb 2:17**) with regards to His assumed hereditary human nature
 - i. that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh (**Rom 8:3**)
 - ii. that He took not the nature of angels, but took of the seed of Abraham (**Heb 2:16**)
 - iii. that He was made of a woman, made under (condemnation of) the law (**Gal 4:4**)
 - iv. that He assumed the flesh or nature wherein dwelleth no good thing (**Rom 7:18**) in common with humanity
- b. This view also accepts the Spirit of Prophecy position that Jesus fully and without exception “accepted the results of the workings of the great law of heredity” (**DA 48**), and therefore could truly be “made in all things like unto His brethren” with regards to the flesh

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. **DA 49**

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. **DA 117**

"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. . . Christ bore **the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed** when He came to the earth to help man. " **1 SM 267-268**

Jesus, . . . took upon himself the **infirmities** and bore the griefs and sorrows of humanity, and conquered in our behalf. He was made like unto his brethren, with the same **susceptibilities, mental and physical**. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin; and he knows how to succor those who are tempted. . . **RH Feb 10, 1885**

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**. **7BC 452-453**

He took the infirmities of degenerate humanity upon Him (**DA 117; MH 180**).

He took on His sinless nature man's **sinful nature** (MM181).

He took the **weakness** of humanity (DA 111).

He took man's nature **degraded** by sin (4BC 1147),

He took man's nature in its **fallen** condition (**11BC 1085; 4BC 1147; DA 112; EW 150; 1SM 256**),

He took man's nature and in its **deteriorated** condition (**1 SM 253**).

47. Our pioneers rejected the **Pre-lapsarian** or **Pre-fall** view of the nature of Christ which teaches that Christ took Adam's sinless human nature when He was born
- a. This position on the nature of Christ in essence teaches that Jesus was "exempt"—that He selectively accepted certain hereditary features of human nature and rejected others at His incarnation
 - b. Jesus selectively took our weakened physical nature with all of its natural urges and liabilities (Jesus could be hungry, thirsty, tired and He could get sick)
 - c. But Jesus did not take the evil tendencies, passions, and inherent propensities of disobedience which all children of Adam inherit at birth
 - d. He was "exempt" from these through some divine intervention
 - e. This is the position that mainstream Christianity takes
 - i. Catholics teach that Mary was the one exempt—so that Jesus could be shielded from all the objectionable and sinful features of fallen nature and be born sinless
 - ii. Evangelicals, meanwhile, teach that Jesus, not Mary was exempt
48. Now, we already know from our past studies that this position is untenable because
- a. It disqualifies Christ from the priesthood
 - b. Puts Him in a place where He has nothing to offer for sin
 - c. Not to mention that it also destroys the completeness of His humanity since the great law of heredity is not allowed to run its full course in the case of Christ's incarnation
 - i. Christ is virtually made to only **half-take** human nature
 - ii. He is given a **sanitized** human nature inoculated from all its objectionable features
49. What do people hope to gain anyway, by teaching that Jesus came in sinless flesh or nature—
- a. when that understanding merely prevents us from seeing the full extent of Christ's condescension?
 - b. when it prevents us from gauging the extreme **risks** Jesus had to take in taking man's sinful fallen nature for man's redemption?
 - c. when all it does is prevent us from having a glimpse of the great love the Father showed to the fallen race in allowing His Son to come in a body of sinful deteriorated flesh only to be condemned and slaughtered as an atoning sacrifice for sin?

Objections Against the Post-Fall View of the Nature of Christ

50. Sad to say that we do have to deal with objections from individuals who will not accept the simple truth regarding the nature of Christ
- a. **OBJECTION #1:** If Jesus took the sinful, fallen nature of Adam after the fall, Jesus would have been born a sinner, needing a Savior Himself
 - a. It is clear from **Rom 8:3** that Jesus had to deal with “sin in the flesh” or sin in His human nature
 - b. “sin in the flesh” refers to the objectionable, offensive, sinful features of His hereditary nature received at birth through “the workings of the great law of heredity” (**DA 48**)
 - i. Self-will or a human will that was opposed to the will of God (**ST Oct 29, 1894**)¹
 - ii. Inherent propensities of disobedience (**5BC 1128**)
 - iii. Selfishness (**LHU 326**)²
 - c. Just because Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh Jesus and had to deal with sin in His own flesh doesn’t mean He became a sinner
 - d. **2 Cor 5:21** says “He was made to be sin”, not made a sinner
 - e. The only way Jesus could have become a sinner is if He participated in our sinning by choice—by cherishing and yielding to the natural propensities of disobedience in His human nature like we all do

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” (Matthew 8:17). 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” (1 Peter 1:19). 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. Christ and the church would have been without hope. **1 SM 256**

- f. Jesus would have been a sinner if He participated in our sinning—this requires choice
- g. He would have become a sinner if He knew sin by sinning

¹ The human will of Christ would not have led him to the wilderness of temptation, to fast, and to be tempted of the devil. It would not have led him to endure humiliation, scorn, reproach, suffering, and death. His human nature shrank from all these things as decidedly as ours shrinks from them. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. The contrast between the life and character of Christ and our life and character is painful to contemplate. What did Christ live to do? It was the will of his heavenly Father. Christ left us an example, that we should follow in his steps. . . **ST October 29, 1894**

² Selfishness is inwrought in our very being. It has come to us as an inheritance, and has been cherished by many as a precious treasure. No special work for God can be accomplished until self and selfishness are overcome. **LHU 326** (see also SC 17)

- h. He would have become a sinner if He had yielded to the temptation by Satan to sin
- b. **Objection #2:** If Jesus took the sinful, fallen nature of Adam after the fall, He would have been an imperfect Sacrifice
 - a. The truth is, it's the other way around
 - b. if Jesus took sinless human nature He would have been an imperfect, inappropriate atoning sacrifice
 - c. What would be the perfect atoning sacrifice?
 - i. It would have to be the flesh or human nature that that law condemns and sentences to death
 - ii. Sinless flesh does not fit that bill
 - d. God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be the perfect sin offering and the death of Jesus to that offending nature at Calvary satisfied the justice of the law and took away "sin in the flesh" in sinful flesh just as the Father desired
 - i. When Jesus rose from the grave, He didn't come up with the same sinful fallen humanity He received from Adam at birth
 - ii. That humanity died forever, as the law demanded
 - iii. Jesus rose from the grave with a totally new sinless, perfect humanity (one that could go through walls)
 - iv. This is the humanity reserved in heaven for the redeemed (**Phil 3:21**)
 - e. The law has no claim on sinless flesh, therefore it is an imperfect, inappropriate sacrifice
- c. **Objection #3:** If Jesus took the sinful, fallen nature of Adam after the fall, it would have been impossible for Him to live a sinless life
 - a. Jesus demonstrated that it is possible to live a sinless life even if encumbered with fallen sinful nature
 - b. His perfect life in sinful flesh showed that possessing a sinful nature is neither an excuse nor a hindrance to perfect conformity to the law of God and the formation of a perfect character
 - c. **1 Pet 2:21-22** says Jesus did no sin even though He was born with inherent propensities of disobedience like all men do
- d. **Objection #4:** There are certain Ellen White statements that suggest that Jesus took Adam's sinless nature at His incarnation

Conclusion

51. In closing, why is it that mainstream Adventism no longer subscribes to the post-fall view of the nature of Christ?
52. Why is it that as the days go by, more and more of us are falling for the Evangelical idea that Jesus came in sinless flesh, when it was not what our pioneers believed?
53. The paradigm shift in the church began seventy years ago during the Evangelical conferences of 1955-1957
 - a. Certain representatives from the church with full support of the GC leaders yielded to the pressure from the Evangelicals to reword and rephrase two fundamental teachings of the church

- i. the **atonement** and
 - ii. the nature of Christ
 - b. Our church through its leaders did this to make these teachings sound more in line with what mainstream Christianity teaches so the church will not be labelled a cult
 - c. The result was the publication of a book called **Questions on Doctrine** which basically said
 - i. Jesus made a full and final atonement on the cross, and
 - ii. Jesus took the sinless nature of Adam before the fall
54. Since then, we have been living in doctrinal disillusionment and confusion regarding the nature of the atonement still going on in the sanctuary above because of the understanding that everything needed for salvation had been obtained at the cross and salvation is a finished work
55. Because of the teaching that Jesus came in sinless flesh, we have effectively disqualified Jesus as high priest and have made the service in the heavenly sanctuary meaningless
56. Because of the understanding that Jesus came in sinless nature, we are unable to see the extent of the **sacrifice** Jesus made in becoming a man, unable to perceive the **risks** He took, and unable to measure the magnitude of the **suffering** He had to endure in order to qualify as our merciful and compassionate High Priest and perfect atoning Sacrifice
57. Our only hope is to recover the precious truths God entrusted to us and to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints
58. Again, let us close this study with the following profound words:

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 whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). 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. **1SM 244**

DEALING WITH OBJECTIONS ON THE NATURE OF CHRIST

- e. **Objection #4:** Certain Ellen White statements suggest that Jesus took Adam’s sinless nature at His incarnation
 - a. The statements below are used to teach that Christ’s human nature was sinless

We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect **sinlessness** of the human nature of Christ. **1 SM 256**

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**

59. Our pioneers believed and taught that Jesus was not “exempt”—that He did not merely take our lower physical nature and its weaknesses (meaning He could become tired, sleepy, hungry, sick, fatigued, etc.), but also assumed the weaknesses of the higher powers of man’s nature (weakened will power and self-centered will)³
- a. Jesus inherited all the strength of human passion (natural propensities and evil propensities)
 - 1. The natural propensities, He brought under the control of an enlightened will
 - 2. The evil propensities and passions (sin in the flesh), He cast out and never cherished (Rom 8:3) so that they never found expression in the life
 - b. Did He exempt Himself from some of the objectionable features of man’s fallen nature?

³ The Spirit of Prophecy speaks of the lower and higher powers of human nature. For instance, in AH 127:

“The **lower passions have their seat in the body** and work through it. The words “flesh” or “fleshly” or “carnal lusts” embrace the lower, corrupt nature; the flesh of itself cannot act contrary to the will of God. We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the **higher powers of the soul.**” **AH 127**

“The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the **higher powers of the mind.**” **COL 114**

Paradigm Shift on the Nature of Christ

60. The Evangelical Conferences of the 1950s

61. The book Questions on Doctrine

- a. Because His humanity is tied to His saving work
 - i. Not the position of the Adventist pioneers (until the 1950s)
- a.

62. Hence, it is clear from the Bible that Jesus took the sinful, fallen nature of Adam after the fall.

63. What does the Spirit of Prophecy teach about the nature of Christ?

"He knows how strong are the inclinations of the natural heart, and He will help in every time of temptation." **5T 177**

- a. Jesus' example of a sinless life in sinless flesh can be obeyed only by those who have sinless flesh, not by those who have sinful, fallen flesh
- b. If Jesus "gave us an example of sinless life" (**DA 49**) in sinless flesh, then that example was unnecessary, since the angels of God who possess sinless nature are demonstrating that already

64. As long as Jesus did exercise His will to not indulge these hereditary tendencies to evil, He remained pure and sinless in character

Not Altogether Like Us

65. Jesus developed no evil propensities and passions of His own as all men do by their own choice, because He did not once cherish or yield to these sinful inherent propensities

66. Jesus was sinless, not because He inherited a sinless nature, but because He did not in the least **participate** in man's sinning, by the exercise of the will

He [Christ] was to take the position at the head of humanity by taking the nature **but not the sinfulness** of man. **ST May 29, 1901.**

He became like one of us **except in sin.** **YI Oct 20, 1886**

- a. The perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ here is not in reference to His hereditary physical nature, but to the character He developed, which remained untainted with sin because Jesus did not in the least participate in sin

67. Jesus developed no evil propensity because He never **yielded** to sin and fell

Re-examining the Baker Letter

- a. In this statement, Jesus never developed any "evil propensities" or "propensities of sin" because He never fell into sin

- b. The statement is not talking about the “evil propensities” or moral weaknesses and liabilities Jesus received from His ancestors through the great law of heredity
- c. Adam and Christ compared and contrasted

Adam	Christ
First Adam	Second Adam
Made in the image of God	Only begotten Son of God
Created a pure sinless being, without taint of sin	Took upon Himself human nature
He could fall and he did fall through transgressing	He could have sinned, He could have fallen; <i>but He did not fall in contrast with Adam (implied)</i>
<i>As a result of his sin, he developed propensities of sin or evil propensities (implied)</i>	Not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity (because He never yielded to sin and fell)
Also because of His sin, his posterity is born with inherent propensities of disobedience	<p>Following the great law of heredity Jesus inherited what Adam passed on to His posterity—“<i>inherent propensities of disobedience!</i>”</p> <p>The hereditary human will of Christ was not naturally in harmony with the will of God and therefore had to be subdued and counteracted in order for Jesus to obey the will of His Father (Matt 26:39)—“not my will be done”</p> <p>If Jesus once yielded to the inherent propensities of disobedience He had inherited from His ancestors, His soul would have been polluted and its integrity compromised</p>