

The Three Eternal Destinies #185 *Defaced but not Erased*

Deface means to mar the first layer, but not so as to lose the intrinsic value of — as in the Fall, Man's eternal value is not marred out of recognition or beyond hope of redemption or restoration. The first righteousness or "original righteousness" was defaced, reducing all mankind to a "secondary righteousness." Augustine did not acknowledge any such thing as "secondary righteousness" but thought all mankind was born into total depravity. He did not account for Rom 1:18, which says God's wrath is against "all who suppress the truth in unrighteousness." They are the ones in verse 21 who did not glorify the Creator or give thanks, and who profess to be wise without Him and became fools instead (verses 22-23). They changed the glory of God into something less. Therefore in verse 24 it was *those* (and those alone) whom God gave up to their own filth and unrighteousness. It was only those who exchanged the truth of God for a lie (verse 25). Therefore they *became* as verses 26-32 describe (Rom 2:6-10). So where will those who do not become depraved spend eternity if they do not even have the chance to receive or reject Messiah? That is, they did not encounter a sent one such as in Jn 13:20 or Jn 7:18 who seeks the glory of the One who sent him (not the other one, as all Christians and Christian preachers). Where will those who heard and rejected a true sent one go? (Lk 10:16). Or where will those go who were guilty of such sins as Rom 1:29?

Defaced, but not erased — if all men have fallen short of the original glory of God they were created with, how much has been retained? There remains enough to *still be like God* (Gen 3:22). That is, Man has not fallen to the extent that the image of God is unrecognizable in him. Man is the very and only representative of the Creator, even though he has fallen short of his full capacity to demonstrate God's likeness. Even when that capacity is not fully realized, not all have become depraved as Rom 1:22-29.

Obviously, by Paul's example of depravity in verses 24-29, there is nothing that takes away God's likeness more than not doing what man was created to do in the first place (Gen 1:26-28; 9:1). Man is to be fruitful and multiply through natural procreation (Gen 2:21-25). Rom 1:26 — They exchanged the natural use for what is against nature, like the men in verse 27 who left the natural use for what is shameful and received in their facial expressions, countenance, and demeanor the guilt and shame of their degraded and debased glory. Verse 28 — God gave them over to a debased mind. Their glory not only was *fallen short* of the glory of God, but also was debased and reduced to *fallen long* or far from the glory of God, to the degree of becoming unrecognizable as to represent His likeness at all.

This is the reason they will go to the second death, since they bore no resemblance to God and could not be of any use to Him in any positive way. They were debased in character or quality so as not to retain any likeness of God (Gen. 3:22). They became so corrupt as to be depraved, while others, although *fallen short*, retained God's likeness so as to be a benefit to others of good will.

In Rom 2:6-10 we see the two categories of man and their two different eternal destinies. Verses 6, 7, and 10 are those who have retained their *fallen-short* state, while verses 8 and 9 are those who did not see fit to retain the likeness of God, so God, due to His righteousness, gave them over (Rom 1:28) to a debased mind to do those things which are not fitting (verse 29), being filled with all unrighteousness, etc., etc. So if a person becomes *filled with unrighteousness* he is no longer in the category of the *Righteous* in Rev 22:11. As Rom 1:29-31 says, they became either unjust or filthy, or both. But the Righteous are all the ones who did not suppress the truth in Rom 1:18. The wrath of God is not revealed from heaven against them, but only against those who do as verse 21 says. This is deliberate, so they became debased or became futile.

Became means that they went through a transition and it did not happen all at once. They became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened. *Futile* means to make empty, vain, foolish, and useless. The word #3154 describes the perverted logic and idolatrous presumption of those who do not honor the Creator or show Him gratitude for creation as verse 20. So they are without excuse (Ps 19:1-4).

Gen 3:22 is a natural law to all mankind. To not acknowledge this law is to deliberately go against it in your

heart, and as a result, God gives you up to become like Sodom and Gomorrah, as Rom 9:29 says (Eze 16:49-50).

It seems that verse 50 is the latter end — the state of being filled with the worse kind of unrighteousness, or as far away as possible from the glory of God (Rom 3:23).

All men are born in Adam's first death, which is in the state of fallenness from the full glory he was created in (even though this full glory did not benefit Adam or Eve, since they both sinned). Gen 2:17 — But did Adam and Eve fall to a second degree, or did they retain their likeness by obeying the innate and inherent good (Gen 3:22), which is intrinsic in man, and also calls one to avoid the evil he is tempted to do (Rev 12:9). This inherent goodness is an essential part of man, which retains the humanity of man and avoids the inhumanity caused by the evil one. He is the angel who became *Satan* — a fallen angel.

A fallen angel has no hope of redemption. One third fell to a debased mind; their ministry is to lead the whole world astray from the everlasting covenant of Gen 3:22 and Isa 24:5. Rev 12:9; 20:3,7-10 — As men are led astray from the inherent knowledge of good and evil we see good men and evil men, as well as we see good angels and evil angels. The evil angels are those who were led astray and by their own violation chose to follow Lucifer, who became *Satan*, the opposer and adversary, liar, and deceiver, the serpent of old (Rev 20:3) . Since their minds have been covered with horrible darkness of deception they deceive men who choose to follow the evil instead of the good in their conscience.

Satan uses the same tactic to lead men astray as he used to lead the angels astray from their intended purpose. The angels and Satan were created in God's original order to do His will as those angels who continue in their original purpose. But as Jude 6 says, they did not keep their proper domain, even as man who was tempted did not. Now both fallen angels and fallen men who have been turned over and became depraved and debased are agents of the adversary, bound under the dark dominion and serving Satan's rebellious enterprise (2 Cor 11:2-4, 13-15; Heb 1:14).

Only redeemed man will finally do what was intended for them to do before they were created. Although restored man will colonize and fill the universe, only redeemed man will rule over the works of His hands (Ps 8:4-6; Heb 2:6-14). To have a redeemed man, it took redemption. So redemption could not be greater than creation, for redemption was carried out for the sake of creation. It was His original purpose not only to have a restored man, but when redeemed man carries out his purpose (Heb 10:13; Rev 11:15; 20:1-2), God will have both a restored man and a redeemed man to do His will forever and ever in the universe. Rev 21:3,24 is the relationship between the restored man and the redeemed man. The redeemed man is to reign over the restored man (Rev 22:5). Only the Holy will reign. Only they are the Body of Elohim (Rev 21:3), brought back to the same likeness as Messiah in Jn 14:9.

Paul did not include all humanity in his description of "the depraved" in Rom 1:18-32. Paul is referring to the depraved in Rom 3:9-12, as was David in Psalms 14 and 53. "The depraved" say in their hearts that there is no God. There is none righteous among "the depraved" as Rev 22:11 categorizes them separately. The depraved are the Unjust and Filthy. The Righteous are not the depraved. Those who begin to suppress the truth they know in their heart, as Rom 1:18 and 2:14, are those in Rom 1:29 who are filled with unrighteous deeds such as follow. "Filled with unrighteousness" means that they were unjust (Pr 28:5). Wicked or evil or unjust and filthy men do not understand justice. A righteous man can lose his own righteousness and become unrighteous (Pr 25:26). But Lot maintained his own righteousness (2 Pet 2:7-8).