

A CRITIQUE of Thomas D. Ross's "Heaven only for the Baptized?"
By Bart Masiero, bondservant of the Lord Jesus Christ

Part II

Other verses Thomas Ross uses to justify "we enter the world with a sinful nature". He cites:

1. Jeremiah 17:9: the "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Answer: What does this have to do with original sin? This verse has nothing to say about infants.

2. Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." In footnote #7 on page 4, he cites this verse and points out that the Ephesian Church "certainly had infant and young children in it (cf. Ephesians 6:1) that 'we all' who are now made alive in Christ at one time were 'children of wrath'."

Answer: If "we all...as children of wrath" and "who were dead in trespasses and sins" includes children and infants --

- A. In Matthew 21:10 when Jesus entered Jerusalem and "all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?'" -- were all the infants and children in Jerusalem saying the same thing?
- B. Did those same infants and children know of the gruesome death of Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:18) and name of the field where he lay (1:19 - "...and it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem...")?
- C. Etc, etc.

3. Mark 7:21-23. Ross says: "This corruption of heart leads us to commit all kinds of sins."

Answer: What does this have to do with original sin? The context here is sin proceeding from the hearts of sinful men. Do infants have hearts filled with fornication? Theft? Slander? Etc.

4. Romans 3:10-12, 23. The argument is, because "there is none righteous, no, not one", and "all have sinned", this necessarily includes infants and children.

Answer: See #2 A & B above. Many more examples could be cited.

5. Gen. 6:5 "that the wickedness of man [is] great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [is] only evil continually." Is this saying that the thoughts of man are evil continually -- *and from infancy?*

Answer: Gen. 8:21 is more explicit than 6:5 "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." The Hebrew word here in Gen 8:21 for "youth" (NAUR) does not mean "infancy". Of ALL 47 occurrences of this word (Strong's #5271) the meaning of this word is either (1) at an age of youth well after infancy, or (2) it is ambiguous:

A. Uses of this word "youth" where it clearly does *not* mean "from infancy":

-- "...so are the children of one's youth" (Psalm 127:4).

-- "...that leaves the companion of her youth" (Proverbs 2:17).

- "...rejoice with the wife of thy youth" (Proverbs 5:18).
- "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lamentations 3:27).
- "...they committed whoredoms in their youth..." (Ezekiel 23:3).

B. ALL OTHER uses of this Hebrew word (except for additional verses which would fit in part A above) are *ambiguous*, some of which are:

- "I have walked before you from my youth" (1 Sam. 12:2)
- "...which forsaketh the guide of her youth" (Prov. 2:17)
- "...you are the friend of my youth" (Jer. 3:4)
- "Moab has been at ease since his youth" (Jer. 31:19)

C. Of the 47 occurrences of this word, the strongest argument to be made for "infancy" would be from Ezek. 16:22, but an analysis of the context shows it to be no different than the others:

"Besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood."

This verse references back to 16:7:

"I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; *your* breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare."

Notice from 16:7 that "naked and bare" clearly means at adolescence or older. The phrase "squirming in your blood" means from infancy (see 16:5, 6); however, in 16:22 the placement of this phrase is significant because it comes AFTER "when you were naked and bare". So the phrase either means that "youth" is at adolescence, or if the last part of v. 22 is tied together as one phrase, it is ambiguous in support of Mr. Ross's position. The former option fits the context best and is consistent with the meaning of this Hebrew word: "...your youth, when you were naked and bare [at adolescence and in contrast to their "abominations and harlotries" of later life (see 16:22a), and when God spread His skirt over them and covered their nakedness (see 16:7, 8)] and squirming in your blood [at birth, 16:6]".

D. Job 31:18 has both "youth" and "infancy" in the same verse, showing a distinction between the two: "But from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, and from infancy I guided her". The word for "infancy" ("beten") in Job 31:18 is the Hebrew word normally used when the idea is "from the womb". It is significant that Gen. 8:21 does not use THIS word for youth. *If "man's heart is evil from infancy"-- why not use the Hebrew word which means "from the womb" instead of one which points to adolescence (or later), or is otherwise ambiguous?*