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## **Romans 5:12–19—The Sin of Adam in Romans and 2 Esdras**

### ***Romans***

The free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (Rom. 5:16–19)

### ***2 Esdras 7***

Similar but more despairing reflections on the effects of Adam's sin are found in a Jewish writing from about the same time period:

It would have been better if the earth had not produced Adam, or else, when it had produced him, had restrained him from sinning. For what good is it to all that they live in sorrow now and expect punishment after death? O Adam, what have you done? For

though it was you who sinned, the fall was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants. For what good is it to us, if an eternal age had been promised to us, but we have done deeds that bring death? And what good is it that an everlasting hope has been promised us, but we have miserably failed? Or that safe and healthful habitations have been reserved for us, but we have lived wickedly? (2 Esdras 7:116–20//4 Ezra 6:46–50)

The book from which this writing is quoted is variously called 2 Esdras or 4 Ezra. It is not one of the books regarded as deuterocanonical by the Roman Catholic Church nor is it recognized as belonging to the Apocrypha by Protestant Christians. It is, however, regarded as scriptural by the Slavonic Orthodox Church, which calls it “3 Esdras” due to a unique system of nomenclature.