"The Promise of Her Victorious Seed": Andrew Fuller's Exposition of Genesis 3

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Ideas have consequences. While this is true in virtually every realm, it is especially true in the sphere of biblical interpretation. To understand the story of the Bible, one has to start where every good story starts: in the beginning. The Book of Genesis sets the trajectory for the overall metanarrative of Scripture. How one interprets the beginning of the story, then, has massive ramifications for his understanding of God, Christ, sin, and redemption. More specifically, the dramatic scenes that unfold in Genesis 3 have more far-reaching implications for one's theology than perhaps any other single chapter in Scripture.

The world in which the Baptist pastor-theologian Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) inhabited during the latter end of the long-eighteenth century was one of dramatic change. From revolutions in America and France to revolutions in industry and science, the world was advancing rapidly. Such was the case in the world of biblical interpretation as well, with the rise of historical criticism.

Nearly two millennia of largely unchallenged exegesis concerning mankind's origins as described in Genesis 1 – 3 came under scrutiny, leading many to dismiss the literal interpretation of the Bible's first chapters as the fanciful machinations of the uneducated.[1] Inevitably, this dismissal led to questions about the deity of Christ and whether or not humans were sinners in need of atonement.

In the midst of these dramatic times, Fuller preached a series of sermons through Genesis at Kettering Baptist Church, which were later adapted and published as a commentary. While his apologetic and polemical works have received much attention, his exegetical works have received relatively little.[2] However, if one's exegesis of Genesis 3 is as consequential as has been claimed, then exploring Fuller's interpretation of this crucial chapter is essential for understanding the theological system of the man Charles Spurgeon referred to as "the greatest theologian of the century."[3] Thus, this article will explore the historical background of Fuller's discourses, analyze his exposition of Genesis 3, keeping in mind his hermeneutical presuppositions, and summarize his theology of the fall, Christ, and the atonement.

Historical Background of Fuller's Genesis Expositions[4]

Fuller is remembered primarily for his definitive response to High-Calvinism in his work The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation (1785), as well as the role he played in the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society. However, from October 7, 1783, until his death on May 7, 1815, Fuller's main responsibility consisted in pastoring the Baptist Church at Kettering. As a recently discovered document in the special archives of what is now Fuller Baptist Church reveals, Fuller committed himself to consecutive expository preaching from at least 1795 until his ill-health prevented him from his pulpit ministry in early 1815. John Satchell, a deacon at Kettering Baptist, recorded in a brief document entitled "Recollections on the Ministry of Mr. F" that Fuller preached through Isaiah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Job from 1795 – 1802.[5] Beginning on October 10, 1802, Fuller began preaching through Genesis, and he concluded his series of discourses nearly two years later on August 12, 1804.[6] Fuller would go on to edit these 58 discourses and publish them in 1806 as Expository

Discourses on the Book of Genesis, Interspersed with Practical Reflections.[7] As he reflected in his dedication to his church family on October 29, 1805,

> You will consider these discourses as the result of having once gone over that part of the Scriptures to which they relate. Were we to go over it again and again, such is the fulness of God's word that we should still find interesting and important matter which had never occurred in reading it before; and this should encourage us not to rest in any exposition, but to be constantly perusing the Scriptures themselves, and digging at the precious ore.

The first edition of *EDBG* was printed as two octavo volumes by Fuller's friend and fellow-Baptist pastor, John Webster Morris (1763–1836),[8] and sold for ten shillings.[9] *EDBG* was met with a warm reception by most, though several reviewers offered more critical comments, especially regarding Fuller's lack of formal education.[10] Nevertheless, even Morris, whose biography of Fuller is more critical than that of Fuller's friend, John Ryland Jr. (1753–1825), noted, "… but of all Mr. Fuller's writings, none have a higher claim to general regard, for their utility and practical importance, than his volumes on the Book of Genesis."[11] Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–92) himself described Fuller's work in his *Commenting and Commentaries* (1876) as, "Weighty, judicious, and full of Gospel truth. One of the very best series of discourses extant upon Genesis, as Bush also thought."[12] Thirteen editions of *EDBG* have been published thus far, testifying to its enduring usefulness to those seeking a greater understanding of the text, while avoiding more technical issues.[13] While he does deal with some technical, grammatical, and theological issues throughout the work, Fuller spends the bulk of his energy seeking to establish and apply the plain meaning of the text, which is expected of a commentary that began as a sermon series. Nevertheless, understanding something of Fuller's hermeneutical method is imperative for unpacking his exegesis of the text.

Fuller's Presuppositions and Hermeneutical Method

The Age of Enlightenment was one in which, at the very least, people began to conceive of life without God (or at least a conscious awareness of him). While by no means mainstream in Great Britain, biblical criticism's

influence was on the rise during the latter half of the long-eighteenth century. More specifically, Deism's dismissal of the supernatural, and thus, the inspiration and trustworthiness of Scripture, proved a greater hermeneutical problem in England than biblical criticism, which was ruling the day on the Continent.[14] Though Fuller ministered in a largely pre-critical era of the late-eighteenth/early-nineteenth centuries, the culture as a whole, and biblical commentators in particular, were beginning to entertain ideas about the historicity and meaning of the text in a way unique to interpretive history.[15]

Unsurprisingly, Fuller stood in line with his Reformation and Puritan forbearers regarding the Bible's inspiration and infallibility, referring to Scripture in his personal confession of faith as "a perfect rule of faith and practice." He further adds, "When I acknowledge it as a perfect rule of faith and practice, I mean to disclaim all other rules, as binding on my conscience; and as well to acknowledge, that if I err, either in faith or practice, from this rule, it will be my crime; for I have ever considered all deviations from divine rules to be criminal."[16] His insistence that the Bible was divinely inspired and authoritative, and that all of its parts served in some shape or form to point to Christ, placed him squarely within the tradition of late orthodoxy.[17] As Yoo notes,

> … even during a time when the dominant trends in hermeneutics were shifting toward modern critical approaches, Fuller's Genesis commentary represents a faithful continuation of the pre-critical Reformed exegetical heritage, adapted to the challenges and needs of his era. It embodies a rich expression of Reformed hermeneutics — deeply biblical, pastorally focused, and theologically robust. His work affirms foundational doctrines of the Reformed tradition such as the fall, original sin, and justification by faith, and, grounded in these doctrines, interprets the text itself from a Christ-centered perspective within a redemptive-historical framework.[18]

As such, Fuller interpreted Genesis according to the grammatical-historical method. His use of typology, especially apparent in the Joseph narrative, reveals a more Christotelic than Christocentric view of the canon, avoiding the overreach of allegory, while affirming Christ as the end of the narrative's figures and symbols, or as Wellum puts it, "The entire plan of God moves to its conclusion in Christ."[19] The reviewer

of Fuller's discourses in *The Evangelical Magazine* noted his adherence to typology as a hermeneutical principle: "He generally confines himself to the literal meaning; and is afraid of venturing into the maze of Allegory farther than he has the sacred *thread* for a cue. Yet he does not reject the doctrine of types." The reviewer goes on to point out Fuller's handling of both Melchizedek and Joseph as examples.[20] As Fuller himself put it in a sermon on 2 Corinthians 4:5,

> We preach 'Christ Jesus the Lord.' This is the grand theme of the Christian ministry. But many have so little of the Christian minister about them, that their sermons have scarcely any thing to do with Christ. They are mere moral harangues. And these, forsooth, would fain be thought exclusively the friends of morality and good works! But they know not what good works are, nor do they go the way to promote them. 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'… Preach Christ, or you had better be any thing than a preacher. The necessity laid on Paul was not barely to preach, but to preach Christ. 'Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel!'… Some are employed in depreciating Christ. But do you honour him. Some who talk much about him, yet do not preach him, and by their habitual deportment prove themselves enemies to his cross.… If you preach Christ, you need not fear for want of matter. His person and work are rich in fulness. Every Divine attribute is seen in him. All the types prefigure him. The prophecies point to him. Every truth bears relation to him. The law itself must be so explained and enforced as to lead to him.…[21]

It is true that Fuller did not receive a formal education beyond grammar school.[22] He nevertheless labored diligently to study the Scriptures, even attempting to learn the original languages. He did so with the help of his friend John Ryland Jr. Several of Fuller's extant documents reveal his ongoing attempts to learn the Hebrew alphabet, grammar, and vocabulary. In fact, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary archives contain Fuller's unpublished manuscript entitled *Thoughts on the Power of Men to Do the Will of God* (1777), which served as an early edition of his *Gospel Worthy*. On the back of several pages (given the lack of readily available paper), Fuller later recorded notes on Hebrew grammar, syntax, and pronunciation. It appears that he even attempts his own translation of Genesis 1:1–6 on the back of

page three. He dates the attempted translation to July 10, 1803, during the time in which he preached through Genesis at Kettering Baptist Church.[23] While this by no means proves that Fuller was proficient with the biblical languages, it does reveal a determination to handle the Scriptures with care.

Regardless of which text he preached, Fuller's regular method was to move from interpretation to doctrinal reflection, and finally, to application. Yoo refers to this as Fuller's "tripartite method" of exposition.[24] In particular, his doctrinal reflections evidence a strong link with the Reformed tradition, which attempted to work out the implications of exegesis for the sake of piety via systematic theology.[25] As a pastor, Fuller was concerned for the spiritual wellbeing of his congregation, whom he deeply loved.[26] Indeed, he knew that to rightly divide the Word of truth, he himself needed to be "spiritually minded."[27] He longed to see Christ formed in them, which he knew would inevitably come from a deeper acquaintance with Scripture for the sake of communion with and obedience to God. Thus, his Genesis commentary evidences a pastoral tone and an emphasis on the implications of the text's meaning for life and godliness. Understanding Fuller's presuppositions, hermeneutical method, and pastoral motivation is key, then to fully appreciate his exposition of Genesis 3.

Fuller's Exposition of Genesis 3

Following the dedication of his commentary to his church family, Fuller proceeds with his exposition of the text. He begins by interpreting Genesis 1:1–4 in a discourse entitled, "On the Book in General and the First Day's Creation." In doing so, Fuller makes two points that are important for understanding his exposition of Genesis 3. First, Fuller assumes Mosaic authorship.[28] Second, he grounds the creation of the world, and of mankind in particular, in the existence of the triune God.[29]

In his second discourse, "On the Five Last Day's Creation," Fuller continues explaining the text with an emphasis on a literal, twenty-four-hour day view of creation, culminating in the creation of man and woman. Regarding the creation of Adam and Eve in the image of God, Fuller states, "The image of God is partly natural, and partly moral; and man was made after both. The former consisted in reason, by which he was fitted for

dominion over the creatures; the latter in righteousness and true holiness, by which he was fitted for communion with his Creator."[30] This is a crucial point both for his exposition of Genesis, as well as for his contributions to the Modern Question debate of the eighteenth century.[31]

In his third discourse, "Creation Reviewed," Fuller expounds Genesis 2 and rounds out this discussion of the creation of man and woman, while also making a Sabbatarian argument concerning the seventh day of creation (consistent with most Particular Baptists),[32] connecting it with a postmillennial view of the end of the world.[33] Most importantly for the sake of the current study, Fuller comments at length about God's prohibition concerning eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He concludes,

> There is every reason to believe that if man had obeyed his Creator's will, he would of his own boundless goodness have crowned him with everlasting bliss. It is his delight to impart his own infinite blessedness as the reward of righteousness; if Adam, therefore, had abode in the truth, he and all his posterity would have enjoyed what was symbolically promised him by the tree of life. Nor is there any reason to suppose but that it would have been the same for substance as that which believers now enjoy through a Mediator, for the Scriptures speak of that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, that is, through the corruption of human nature, as being accomplished by Christ.[34]

Consistent with the Reformed tradition, Fuller argued that Adam and Eve were created in innocence, enjoying unimpeded communion with God. If they trusted in their Creator and his faithful provision for them, adhering to the covenant of works,[35] they would have continued enjoying their relationship with God until they were transferred into the eternal state of blessedness. Understanding the state of mankind both before and after the fall, then, is of upmost importance for man's knowledge of himself and his Creator. As John Calvin (1509 – 1564) stated, "… we cannot have a clear and complete knowledge of God unless it is accompanied by a corresponding knowledge of ourselves. This knowledge of ourselves is twofold: namely, to know what we were like when we were first created and what our condition became after the fall of Adam."[36]

With an overview of Fuller's exposition of Genesis 1 – 2 complete, we can now begin exploring his interpretation of chapter three. Whereas Fuller only dedicated three discourses to his exposition of the first two chapters, he spends three discourses covering the third chapter alone. What follows, then, is both a summary and an analysis of Fuller's exegesis of Genesis 3, using Fuller's discourses as the section breaks.

"Discourse 4: The Fall of Man (Gen 3:1 – 7)"

After a very brief summary of man's happy state in the Garden of Eden, Fuller launches into a description of "the introduction of moral evil into our world, the source of all our misery."[37] In doing so, he begins by identifying the serpent as the instrument of Satan to bring about the downfall of the man and woman. He references Revelation 12:9, where John refers to him as "the old serpent, the devil," which is an example of Fuller's adherence to the *analogia fidei* in seeking to establish the meaning of the text, referencing other texts to bring further clarity.[38] Perhaps reflecting the skepticism of his day and time, Fuller considers whether or not the serpent spoke audibly in his temptation of Eve. Regardless, as Fuller explains, Satan clearly seeks to influence peoples' minds, as he attempted to do with Jesus in the wilderness (Matt 4:1 – 11). The point is not so much how Satan speaks but that, "it is certain from the whole tenor of Scripture that evil spirits have, by the divine permission, access to human minds; not so indeed as to be able to impel us to sin without our consent, but it may be in some such manner as men influence each other's minds to evil. Such seems to be the proper idea of a tempter."[39] Though the believer may be conscience of the choices before him, he may not be aware of the influences at work. For this reason, as Fuller states, we are encouraged to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matt 6:13). Fuller draws a similar conclusion in a letter on the same subject:

> It is allowed that the devil has no power over our minds without Divine permission; yea, further, that he has no such power over us as to draw us into *sin* without our own consent. I will not say that he cannot suggest sinful thoughts without our consent; but certainly he cannot, without our consent, draw us into sin. If we yield not, we may be said to be *tempted*, as Christ was; but *sin* does not consist in being *tempted*, but in *falling in* with the temptation.[40]

From both the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden and Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, the reader is taught to be watchful through prayer, remembering God's clearly revealed Word in light of the tempter's skims. In fact, Eve's initial response to the serpent is commendable, since she clearly repeats the instructions of her Creator in light of the serpent deliberately misconstruing his words. As Fuller notes, Satan attempts to twist God's Word so as to encourage doubt in the woman's mind. However, rather than trusting in the goodness of the Creator, she is led to believe that God is withholding from her, that his intentions are not pure. "It seems also to contain an insinuation," Fuller observes, "that if man must not eat of 'every tree,' he might as well have eaten of none. And thus, discontent continues to overlook the good, and pores upon the one thing wanting. 'All this avails me nothing, so long as Mordecai is at the gate.'"[41] Though there is no clear connection with the passage, Fuller uses Esther 5:17 as an illustration, in which Haman's discontentment demonstrates the same kind of effect that Satan seeks to produce in Eve — no tree in the garden is worth eating from if she cannot eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Clearly, Fuller's pastoral intention is to help his reader see the beguiling nature of the serpent and his evil desire to tempt the woman into believing that God is withholding his best from her. "If we would shun evil," Fuller warns, "we must shun the appearance of it and all the avenues which lead to it. To parley with temptation is to play with fire.[42] In all this Eve sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."[43]

Though Eve shunned his first attack, the serpent does not stop his assault. As Fuller explains, the serpent answers Eve's certain response with a bold response of his own. He leads her in a train of thought that suggests she knows more — indeed, she is more — than what God has thus far stated. Fuller then provides a universal principle that appears to have contemporary relevance with his own day and time. "This artifice of Satan is often seen in his ministers. Nothing is more common than for the most false and pernicious doctrines to be advanced with a boldness that stuns the minds of the simple and induces a doubt: 'Surely I must be in the wrong, and they in the right, or they could not be so confident.'"[44] The serpent does not say that either God or Eve is wrong. Rather, he boldly asserts that God knows what will actually happen when Eve eats the fruit ("You will not surely die"),[45] and he does so in a way that suggests that Eve should know this. In other words,

the serpent flatters Eve. "And those doctrines which flatter our pride or provoke a vain curiosity to pry into things unseen," Fuller warns, "proceed from the same quarter. By aspiring to be a god, man became too much like a devil, and where human reason takes upon itself to set aside revelation, the effects will continue to be much the same."[46] In a sense, Fuller encapsulates the deistic worldview of his day, in which God's special revelation was rejected in favor of human reason. As he summarized in his introduction to *The Gospel Its Own Witness* (1799),

> The controversies between believers and unbelievers are confined to a narrower ground than those of professed believers with one another. Scripture testimony, any further than as it bears the character of truth, and approves itself to the conscience, or is produced for the purpose of explaining the nature of genuine Christianity, is here out of the question. *Reason* is the common ground on which they must meet to decide their contests. On this ground Christian writers have successfully closed with their antagonists; so much so that, of late ages, notwithstanding all their boast of reason, not one in ten of them can be kept to the fair and honourable use of this weapon. On the contrary, they are driven to substitute dark insinuation, low wit, profane ridicule, and gross abuse. Such were the weapons of Shaftesbury, Tindal, Morgan, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Hume and Gibbon; and such are the weapons of the author of *The Age of Reason*.[47]

Whether in eighteenth-century England or the Garden of Eden, the appeal to the power of human reason over the clear revelation of God leads to pride, and thus, to infidelity.

With Eve taking the bait, the poison, as Fuller illustrates, begins to seep in. Desiring to be wise, she takes the fruit and eats it. However, Eve does not stop there. She goes on and gives the fruit to her husband, who likewise eats of the tree of which God strictly forbade them. At first, everything seemed to be in good order. However, "The connection between sin and misery is certain, but not always immediate; its immediate effect is deception and stupefaction, which commonly induce the party to draw others into the same condition."[48] While Fuller acknowledges that Eve sinned first, citing 1 Timothy 2:14, he is quick to point out that Adam "sinned with his eyes open," so to speak. Rather than leading his wife in obedience, like Abraham after him (Fuller cites Gen 16:2), he "hearkened to her voice," and was led

into disobedience.[49] Fuller goes so far as to say that "it was the duty of [Eve's] husband to have disowned her forever" rather than join her in her infidelity.[50] Fuller appears to echo Jesus' own words in Matthew 10:37–38 concerning the need to love Christ above even one's nearest relations.

Finally, Fuller draws his discourse to a close by giving attention to the fallout of Adam and Eve's disobedience. "Conscious innocence has forsaken them. Conscious guilt, remorse, and shame possess them," Fuller explains.[51] Indeed, their eyes are now open, but as Fuller quotes the poet John Milton (1608–1674), their eyes are open to "sights of woe."[52] The man and the woman now feel shame, of which their nakedness is an outward sign. Importantly, Fuller notes that they have been "stripped of their original righteousness," in addition to "their honour, security, and happiness."[53] Being image bearers of their Creator, Fuller affirms that the man and the woman were created with an original righteousness, a complete innocence, that, by God's design and grace, gave them unfettered access to him.[54] However, with the introduction of sin, they realize there are physically naked, and perhaps subconsciously, realize that they are spiritually naked, exposed to the eyes of him to whom they must give account (Heb 4:13). Thus, they attempt to cover their nakedness and shame by making a covering from leaves, but as Fuller quotes Henry Ainsworth (1571–1622), "this was to cover, not to cure."[55] This, as Fuller explains, is the attempt of every sinner — to shift the blame and cover their shame — apart from the gracious intervention of God. Thus, as Fuller concludes with a reference to Luke 18:9, sinners are bent on "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others."[56]

In exegeting the text thus far, Fuller has established a theological foundation that is clearly espoused by the Protestant, and more specifically, the Reformed tradition. He has articulated the *imago dei*, explaining that humans were created in the likeness of his Creator with original righteousness.[57] And in line with the Augustinian tradition, Fuller infers that people had both the ability to sin and not to sin in the Garden of Eden (*posse peccare et posse non peccare*).[58] Thus, man was fit for communion with his Maker, in so far as he adhered to the covenant of works through faith. However, Fuller also articulates the doctrine of the fall, in which Adam and Eve willingly chose to rebel against the command of their Creator in order to become wise through

eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As the Second London Baptist Confession puts it,

> Although God created man upright and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, and threatened death upon the breach thereof, yet he did not long abide in this honour; Satan using the subtlety of the serpent to subdue Eve, then by her seducing Adam, who, without any compulsion, did willfully transgress the law of their creation, and the command given unto them, in eating the forbidden fruit, which God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.[59]

Fuller will continue to develop this doctrine in his subsequent discourses. For now, however, it is important to note Fuller's adherence to Reformed orthodoxy, both to accurately assess his exposition, as well as to place his theological conclusions in the context of his more controversial polemical works, which will become apparent in the following discourses.

"Discourse 5: The Trial of the Transgressors (Gen 3:8–14)"

After recalling the "original transgression of our first parents,"[60] Fuller proceeds to describe God's "walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Here, he meditates on how God would *walk* and *speak* with his creatures in a physical manner. But whereas we may not comprehend how God—an infinite spirit—could accomplish this, "he was not at a loss how to hold communion with them that love him."[61] Fuller may have the Son's incarnation in view here, for in explaining the imagery of the owner of a garden walking through his garden in the evening, he references Song of Solomon 6:11, stating, "how the vine flourished, and the pomegranate budded." Typical of the Particular Baptists and the Reformed tradition, Fuller interpreted the Song of Solomon as primarily a description of Christ's love for his Church; that is, a Divine allegory.[62] Here, then, in the first garden, the Divine lover meets with his beloved. However, the feelings of love are not reciprocated, due to the man's act of infidelity.[63]

God approaches his creatures in kindness and familiarity, but they do not respond in kind. "Not only does conscious guilt make them afraid," Fuller observes, "but contrariety of heart to a holy God renders them

averse to drawing near to him."[64] Their failure to observe God's prohibition led not only to guilt and shame, but also to opposition to God himself. Referencing Isaiah 26:10, Fuller highlights how the wicked continue in their unrighteousness even when they are shown kindness. As a result, they will not "behold the majesty of the Lord." Instead of responding to his call, Adam and Eve hide themselves from the gaze of the Lord. "Great is the cowardice which attaches to guilt," Fuller reflects.[65] In the moment, Adam and Eve's attempt to hide themselves seemed logical. But as the reader pauses to reflect, it appears absurd that they should try to shield themselves from the one to whom Fuller refers to as "the omniscient God."[66] In his systematic theology (which his death prevented him from completing), Fuller distinguishes between the "natural" and the "moral" perfections of God, "the former respect his greatness, the latter his goodness; or, more particularly, the one refers to his infinite understanding, his almighty power, his eternity, immensity, omnipresence, immutability, &c.; the other, to his purity, justice, faithfulness, goodness, or, in one word, to his holiness."[67] While his moral perfections refer to those attributes which pertain to his interaction with and salvation of men, his natural perfections refer to those attributes which are manifested in creation and his providential rule of the universe, pointing to what is essential to his nature. Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) spoke of God's perfections in a similar manner in his famous *Religious Affections* (1746), which greatly influenced Fuller. He states,

> … divines make a distinction between the natural and moral perfections of God: by the moral perfections of God, they mean those attributes which God exercises as a moral agent, or whereby the heart and will of God are good, right, and infinitely becoming, and lovely; such as his righteousness, truth, faithfulness, and goodness; or, in one word, his holiness. By God's natural attributes or perfections, they mean those attributes, wherein, according to our way of conceiving of God, consists, not the holiness or moral goodness of God, but his greatness; such as his power, his knowledge whereby he knows all things, and his being eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, his omnipresence, and his awful and terrible majesty.[68]

While not discounting God's natural perfections, Fuller emphasizes the revelation of his moral perfections because, "The former are glorious as

connected with the latter, but the latter are glorious in themselves. Power and knowledge, and every other attribute belonging to the greatness of God, could they be separated from righteousness and goodness, would render him an object of dread, and not of love; but righteousness and goodness, whether connected with greatness or not, are lovely."[69] This view accords with Fuller's exposition of the present passage. Before their sinful rebellion, Adam and Eve saw God's omniscience through the lens of his goodness and love. However, the guilt and shame that resulted from their sin led to a dread of God's knowledge. Thus, "we see here to what a stupid and besotted state of mind sin had already reduced them."[70]

The insinuation is that the man and the woman do not respond to God as was their habit whenever they heard God walking in the garden. Thus, the Lord calls to them, and to Adam in particular, "Where art thou?"[71] As Fuller notes, the language seems to be that of "injured friendship."[72] He then alludes to either Jeremiah 2:6 or Hosea 13:5, where the Lord "interrogates" his people for their failure to respond in love and obedience to him. Such language should lead the reader to self-reflection: "Where art *thou*?"[73] With pastoral intention, Fuller asks, "Sinner, where art thou? What is thy condition? In what way art thou walking, and whither will it lead thee?"[74]

Adam is led to answer his Maker, who, as Fuller notes, is able to summon anyone to his bar for judgment, citing Psalm 50:4. Rather than responding with the language of repentance for his sin, however, Adam only "speaks of its effects."[75] Here, Fuller draws a correlation with Cain's response to God, when he pronounces judgment for his brother's murder. Cain's concern was with the fallout of his sin, not the fact that he had offended "the kindest and best of all beings."[76] His main concern is pastoral; however, he makes an important theological statement when he says, "Oh reader! We must now be clothed with a better righteousness than our own, or how shall we stand before him?"[77] Fuller uses the language of imputation to convey man's need before a holy God; that is, sinful man must receive an alien righteousness if he is to receive eternal life. Imputation was a contentious subject between Fuller and the elder Abraham Booth (1734–1806), who questioned Fuller's orthodoxy following his second edition of *The Gospel Worthy* (1801). In short, Booth accused Fuller of abandoning penal substitution for the moral governmental view, stemming from the writings of Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), but revived by the New Divinity men such as such as

Jonathan Edwards Jr. (1745–1801), Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), and Stephen West (1735–1818).[78] While it is clear that Fuller was influenced by these men, their influence on his theology is overstated. As Chun observes,

> E. F. Clipsham has chronicled changes that took place over three stages in Fuller's work: his earliest views, which all occur prior to 1787; his intermediate period, which stretched from 1787 to 1799; and finally his mature era, which covered the years 1806 until his death. It was during this intermediate period, perhaps even slightly before, that Fuller was carefully reading Edwards's *Justification by Faith Alone.* In fact, it was during this period that Fuller first published *Socinianism* (1793) and preached his sermon on *The Christian Doctrine of Rewards* (1799), which contains an excerpt from Edwards's sermon on Justification. This means that Booth's concern over Fuller being heavily influenced by New Divinity's governmentalism from 1787 to 1799 needs to be reevaluated. If Fuller's exposure to Edwards sermon on justification dates back to 1785, then his use of figurative language in the doctrines of imputation and justification, which Abraham Booth fiercely opposed, need not be attributed to the influence of New England theologians. Instead it could be traced back to the master architect himself: Edwards.[79]

It is evident that Fuller employs governmental language to correct perceived errors in High-Calvinistic descriptions of the atonement. In relation to imputation more specifically, he was concerned that their common parlance went too far. Fuller attempted to address these concerns in defining his terms in his letter on imputation to Booth. In defining imputation, he states,

> Finally: *Imputation* ought not to be confounded with *transfer.* In its proper sense, we have seen, there is no transfer pertaining to it. In its figurative sense, as applied to justification, it is righteousness itself that is imputed; but its *effects* only are transferred. So also in respect of sin. Sin itself is the object of imputation; but neither this nor guilt are, strictly speaking, transferred: for neither of them are transferable objects. As all that is transferred in the imputation of righteousness is its beneficial effects; so all that is transferred in the imputation of sin is its penal effects.[80]

As Clary summarizes, "For Fuller, though he may have used governmental language it did not *ipso facto* require him to deny penal substitution, imputation, or particular redemption."[81] While more will be said shortly, it is important to note, as his exposition of Genesis 3:10 attests, that, even with the use of moral governmental language, Fuller still held to a well-attested, Reformed view of penal substitution.[82]

While Adam avoided the true reason for hiding, God was not content to let the matter go. Adam's admittance that he was naked, or rather, felt naked, began to reveal the heart of the matter, leading God to ask him if he had eaten from the tree from which he and Eve had been forbidden. Rather than admit his guilt and humble himself before his Creator, however, Adam continues with basic, if not evasive, answers. "But oh," Fuller remarks, "the hardening nature of sin!"[83] Sin, as it were, blinds the eyes and hardens the heart of the creature toward his Creator. As Fuller put it in his confession of faith, "I believe the conduct of man, in breaking the law of God, was most unreasonable and wicked in itself, as well as fatal in its consequences to the transgressor; and that sin is of such a nature, that it deserves all the wrath and misery with which it is threatened, in this world, and in that which is to come."[84] Thus, rather than owning his decision to eat the fruit, Adam shifts the blame to Eve. Citing Proverbs 19:3, Fuller observes, "Such a confession was infinitely worse than none. Yet such is the spirit of fallen man to this day. It was not me … it was my wife, or my husband, or my acquaintance, that persuaded me; or it was my situation in life, in which thou did place me!"[85] All such equivocations, however, will not stop God from bringing the sinner to justice.

God then calls the woman to give an answer, and like her husband, she shifts the blame, accusing the serpent of beguiling her, rather than admit her guilt: "the devil tempted me to it!"[86] "Such is the excuse," Fuller notes, "which multitudes make to this day when they can find no better."[87] Importantly, Fuller notes, "The workings of conviction in the minds of men are called the 'strivings of the Spirit,' and afford a hope of mercy. Though they are no certain sign of grace received, (as there was nothing good at present in our first parents) yet they are the workings of a merciful God, and prove that he has not given over the sinner to hopeless ruin."[88] The phrase "strivings of the Spirit" is likely an allusion to Genesis 6:3, in which God states that his spirit "shall not always strive with man." As Fuller conveys it, these strivings

are a sign of God's Spirit working to produce conviction in the sinner; thus, they reveal God's desire to show mercy. Fuller's theological mentor, Jonathan Edwards, developed the same theme in a sermon on Hosea 5:15. Fuller likely owned the volume containing this sermon.[89] The question is, how does God hold sinful man accountable for not responding to the Spirit when he cannot respond? Fuller addressed this issue in his "Answers to Queries" concerning the love of God toward his creatures:

> Supernatural and effectual grace is indeed necessary to the *actual production* of good in men; but is never represented as necessary to justify the goodness of God in *expecting* or *requiring it*. All that is necessary to this end is, that he furnish them with rational powers, objective light, and outward means. In proof of this, let all those scriptures be considered in which God *complains* of men for not repenting, believing, obeying, &c …. From the whole, I conclude that there are two kinds of influence by which God works on the minds of men: First, That which is common, and which is effected by the ordinary use of motives presented to the mind for consideration. Secondly, That which is special and supernatural. The one is exercised by him as the moral Governor of the world; the other as the God of grace, through Jesus Christ. The one contains nothing mysterious, any more than the influence of our words and actions on each other; the other is such a mystery that we know nothing of it but by its effects. The former *ought* to be effectual; the latter *is* so.[90]

Thus, we see Fuller's distinction between natural and moral ability that he developed most famously in *The Gospel Worthy*. Man is still accountable for resisting the Spirit, even if he is spiritually unable to respond in faith. He is still God's creature, and he possess the natural, rational powers to respond to his Maker. But as Fuller states, the effectual working of the Spirit is needed to produce true repentance in the heart.[91]

Lastly, God speaks to the serpent; however, he does not question him as he did Adam and Eve. Instead, God moves immediately to pronounce a curse for his wickedness. Why? "Because no mercy was designed to be shewn him. He is treated as an avowed and sworn enemy. There was no doubt *wherefore* he had done it, and therefore no *reason* is asked of his conduct."[92] It is not as though God was angry with the serpent itself. Rather, "as under that form Satan had tempted the woman, so that shall be the form under which he

shall receive his doom."[93] Interestingly, Fuller mentions the fact that some think that the fallen angels still had hope of restoration before this moment. Fuller does not seek to provide a final answer; he only notes that if there had been such a hope, "the curse could only have added a greater degree of misery."[94]

Fuller ends his discourse before addressing God's pronouncement of the curses. In doing so, however, he has both established the theological groundwork for understanding sin's significance, as well as prepared the reader to better appreciate God's plan to rescue his fallen creatures. In his final discourse on Genesis 3, Fuller's exegesis provides a glimpse into his theological conclusions that shape his view of redemption.

"Discourse 6: The Curse of Satan and a Blessing to Man — Effects of the Fall (Gen 3:15–24)"

In the final discourse of this study, we discover Fuller's interpretation of a pivotal biblical passage to the metanarrative of Scripture. He begins by noting how God never reveals the true identity of the serpent. Rather than placing the blame for the debacle on Satan, then, God intimates that, "By this we may learn that it is of no account, as to the criminality of sin, whence it comes, or by whom or what we are tempted to it. If we choose it, it is ours, and we must be accountable for it."[95] Fuller makes a similar point in his "Answers to Queries" regarding God's permission of evil: "With respect to moral evil, God permits it, and it was his eternal purpose so to do. If it be right for God to permit sin, it could not be wrong for him to determine to do so, unless it be wrong to determine to do what is right. The decree of God to permit sin does not in the least excuse the sinner, or warrant him to ascribe it to God, instead of himself."[96] Thus, the man and the woman are held accountable for *their* choice to disobey God's command. Nevertheless, God speaks a word of hope — a promise — doing so as he pronounces the curse on the serpent. God does so, as Fuller argues, because Adam and Eve are not in a state of mind to receive a more direct promise, since their hearts have been hardened by sin. Thus, God speaks the promise through the curse of the serpent. "The situation of Adam and Eve at this time was like that of sinners under the preaching of the gospel," Fuller remarks.[97] By this, he seems to mean that the proclamation of the gospel is a message of hope that flows from the pronouncement of coming judgment. The heart of

the sinner may only hear the pronouncement of judgment because of their insensible heart, but the message of hope is there. Additionally, Adam and Eve may hear good news about a coming salvation through their offspring, but not necessarily their salvation. Yet, Fuller makes four points to counter this misapprehension.

First, "The ruin of Satan's cause was to be accomplished by one in human nature."[98] The coming destruction of Satan's cause and kingdom would be one with an "inferior" nature to his own, especially before his fall from glory. "It is possible that the rejoicings of eternal wisdom over man were known in heaven and first excited his envy," Fuller observes, "and that his attempt to ruin the human race was an act of revenge." The thought of a son of man bringing about his downfall would have been humiliating in and of itself.

Second, "It was to be accomplished by the seed of the woman."[99] The very same woman whom Satan used to bring about the downfall of the human race, God would work through to bring about the descendant who would crush his head. Not only would Satan be humiliated by a human, but he would be further embarrassed by God overcoming his schemes to work his plan of salvation, carried out through the Messiah, "the Son of God."[100] Third, "The victory should be obtained, not only by the Messiah himself, but by all his adherents."[101] While the "seed of the woman" refers primarily to the Messiah himself, Fuller contrasts this statement with "the seed of the serpent." Thus, everyone who trusts in the Messiah joins in his victory over the serpent. In this connection, Fuller cites Revelation 12:17, which states, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." In his commentary on Revelation, Fuller links the wrath of the dragon against the seed of the woman with the persecution of Protestants at the hands of the Catholics after the Reformation. The same venom, however, can be seen in the way Protestants have persecuted their own, leading to the flight of many believers to North America in the seventeenth century. "Should a flood of persecution yet be in reserve for the church of Christ," as Fuller concludes his discourse on Revelation 12,

> [I]t may be the last effort of an expiring foe; and from that the *earth* will preserve her by swallowing it up; it may be in some such way as the invasion

> of Philistines preserved David, or as political struggles have often been favourable to Christians, by furnishing those who wished to persecute them with other employment. The dragon, provoked by his want of success against the woman, may vent his malice on the remnant of her seed that are within his reach: but his time is short. His agents 'the beast and the false prophet,' will soon be taken; and the Angel, with a great chain in his hand, shall next lay hold of *him*, and cast him into the bottomless pit.[102]

On top of all the humiliation he has already suffered, then, the serpent will be conquered by the multitude of the redeemed, when "every individual believer shall be made to come near, and as it were, set his feet upon the neck of his enemy."[103]

Fourth and finally, "though it should be a long war, and the cause of the serpent would often be successful, yet in the end it should be utterly ruined." Fuller distinguishes between the blow to the Messiah's heel versus the blow to the serpent's head, the latter being fatal. "For this purpose is he manifested in human nature," Fuller notes, "that he may destroy the works of the devil, and he will never desist till he have utterly crushed his power."[104] In a sermon on Psalm 40:6–8, Fuller similarly summarizes the metanarrative of Scripture:

> It is suggested that, whenever Messiah should come, the great body of Scripture prophecy should be accomplished in him: 'In the volume of the book it is written of me.' That the prophetic writings abound in predictions of the Messiah, no Jew will deny: the only question is, Are they fulfilled in Jesus? You know (I speak to them who read the Bible) that 'the seed of the woman was to bruise the head of the serpent.' You know that God promised Abraham, saying, In *thy seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. You know that Jacob, when blessing the tribe of Judah, predicted the coming of *Shiloh*, unto whom the gathering of the people should be. You know that Moses spoke of a *Prophet* whom the Lord your God should raise up from the midst of you, like unto him, to whom you were to hearken, on pain of incurring the Divine displeasure. You know that the Messiah is prophetically described in the Psalms, and the prophets, under a great variety of forms; particularly as the *Anointed* of the Lord — the King — the Lord of David, to whom Jehovah spoke — the 'child born,' whose name should be called 'the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace'—

> the 'Rod out of the stem of Jesse'—'God's servant, whom he upholds; his *elect*, in whom his soul delighteth'—'him whom *man despiseth*, and whom the nation abhorreth'—'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief'—'the Lord our righteousness'—'Messiah the Prince'—'the Branch'—'the Messenger of the covenant,' &c. Thus it was that in the volume of the book it was written of him. Whoever proves to be the Messiah, your fathers rejoiced in the faith of him.[105]

Just as God would speak hope in the midst of the judgment poured out on God's people through Babylon, so God speaks hope to all who believe in the Messiah despite the judgment that has come into the world through the entrance of sin. "There are two great armies in the world," Fuller observes, "Michael and his angels, warring against the dragon and his angels, and according to the side we take, such will be our end."[106]

Having explained what has historically been referred to as the *protoevangelium,* Fuller pivots to describe the curses pronounced upon the woman, the man, and their offspring. Citing Romans 5:18, Fuller states, "Paul teaches us that, by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, and such a condemnation as stands opposed to justification of life."[107] Here we see that Fuller affirms both total depravity and Adam's federal headship.[108] He summarizes the problem of man's sin in a sermon on Ephesians 2:13, stating in connection with Romans 5:18,

> Had there been no provision of mercy through the promised Seed, there could have been no more communion between God and man, any more than between God and the fallen angels. Men might have dragged out a guilty and miserable existence in the world, but they must have lived and died under the curse. Whatever had been bestowed upon them, it would have been in wrath, in like manner as riches are given some men to their hurt. Whatever had been their troubles, they would have had no God to repair to under them; and, whatever their prospects, the hope of a blessed hereafter would have made no part of them.[109]

Thus, when Adam and Eve fell, the whole human race fell with them. Left to themselves, mankind will continue in his stubborn rebellion against God, unless God intervenes to save him.

Until the final judgment, however, humanity lives under the curse. As for the woman, her pain in childbirth will be greatly multiplied.[110] Additionally, while she was subordinate to the man in the garden, she will now be treated like a slave in many contexts. As Fuller explains, "This is especially the case where sin reigns uncontrolled, as in heathen and Mahometan countries. Christianity, however, so far as it operates, counteracts it, restoring woman to her original state, that of a friend and companion."[111]

The man's lot will be filled with pain as well. Rather than enjoying the fruit of the trees in the garden, he will now work for food from the cursed ground, laboring for bread in sorrow by the sweat of his brow. From the same dust that he was created, Adam will work to eke out an existence, and to the dust he will return when his life comes to an end. Referencing Hebrews 9:27, Fuller records, "A veil is at present drawn over a future world, but we elsewhere learn that at what time 'the flesh returns to dust, the spirit returns to God who gave it,' and that the same sentence which appointed man 'once to die,' added, 'but after this the judgment.'"[112]

One day, the Lord will reverse the curse (Psalm 67:6). Until then, as Fuller notes, God is restraining the evil of men through the toil of their labors in the fallen world. In so far as men believe in Christ, however, these labors are sanctified for their blessing according to God's mercy. Paraphrasing 2 Corinthians 4:17, Fuller explains, "To them they are light afflictions, and last but for a moment, and while they do last, 'work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' To them, in short, death itself is introductory to everlasting life."[113] In fact, as Fuller observes, in naming the woman Eve ("life" or "living"), it is possible that Adam is expressing "his faith in the promise of her victorious Seed," and thus, "we may consider this as the first evidence in favour of his being renewed in the spirit of his mind."[114]

Before Adam and Eve are driven from the garden, God reveals his grace to them once more. In place of the leafed loincloths the man and the woman fashioned for themselves, God himself provides animals skins to cover their nakedness. In doing so, as Fuller reasons, God established the practice of sacrifice in order to show man his moral degeneracy, as well as the means by which man must be saved. "Is it not natural to conclude," Fuller asks, "that God only can hide our moral nakedness, and that the way in which he does it is by covering us with the righteousness of our atoning sacrifice?"[115] Here again we find language suggesting that Fuller still held to penal substitution.

As Paul Brewster argues, "Though his opponents would loudly claim that Fuller had denied the substitutionary nature of the atonement, the truth is that he simply added governmental language to his repertoire of speaking and writing about the cross. He in no way abandoned his commitment to the substitutionary nature of Christ's death."[116]

Finally, God forces the man and the woman from the garden and from the tree which symbolized life. "He has broken my covenant," says God, "let neither him nor his posterity henceforward expect to regain it by any obedience of theirs."[117] Here, then, Fuller states that the covenant of works has ended, giving way to the covenant of grace. Fuller speaks to this covenant in a sermon on Romans 8:18–23, stating,

> The apostle, having established the great doctrine of justification by faith, dwells here on things connected with it; some of which are designed to guard it against abuse, and others to show its great importance …. Having thus entered on the privileges of believers, the sacred writer is borne away, as by a mighty tide, with the greatness of his theme. 'Heirs of God!' what an inheritance! Such is the tenor of the covenant of grace: 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'—'Joint-heirs with Christ!' what a title! We possess the inheritance not in our own right, but in that of Christ; who, being 'heir of all things,' looketh down on his conflicting servants, and saith, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.' It is true, we must suffer awhile; but if it be 'with him,' we shall be glorified together.[118]

Further highlighting this transition of covenants, Fuller notes God's placement of the cherubim and the flaming sword to prevent anyone from accessing the garden, stating, "Let this suffice to impress us with that important truth: 'by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified,' and to direct us to a tree of life which has no flaming sword to prevent our access!"[119] "Yet even in this," Fuller concludes, "as in the other threatenings, we may perceive a mixture of mercy. Man had rendered his days evil, and God determines they shall be but few. It is well for us that a life of sin and sorrow is not immortal."[120]

Conclusion: Fuller's Theology of the Fall, Christ, and the Atonement

Having analyzed Fuller's exposition of Genesis 3, we are now prepared to draw conclusions concerning his theology of the fall, Christ, and the atonement. While he does not develop any full-blown doctrinal summaries, his exegesis provides clarity regarding his thought trajectory, giving the reader direction for Fuller's theological deductions. Given that Fuller produced his commentary within the last ten years of his life, we can safely assume, in line with E. F. Clipsham's observations, that his exposition reveals his mature thoughts.

First, Fuller's theology of the fall is consistent with that of the Reformed tradition and his Puritan forbearers. Satan, disguised in the form of the serpent, deceived Eve, leading her to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Instead of leading his wife in obedience, Adam joined her in disobedience. As a result, both the man and woman felt ashamed and hid themselves from the presence of God as he walked through the garden. After questioning them, God pronounced curses upon the serpent, the woman, and the man. The curse resulted in both temporal and eternal death for the man and the woman as well as their posterity, because Adam serves as mankind's federal head. As Fuller put it in his statement of faith, "I believe the first sin of Adam was not merely personal, but that he stood as our representative; so that, when he fell, we fell in him, and became liable to condemnation and death; and what is more, are all born into the world with a vile propensity to sin against God."[121] Thus, all men are totally depraved; yet, they are still accountable to God. While they are morally unable to respond apart from the grace of God, they still maintain the natural ability, since the image of God was marred, but not destroyed.[122]

Second, Fuller's exposition provides a limited but clear Christology that is both consistent with the Great Tradition and in sharp contrast to the Socinianism of his day.[123] Jesus is the Messiah, the God-Man, the offspring of the woman, who would crush the head of the serpent through his death, resurrection, and the final judgment. "From the whole," Fuller noted, "we see that Christ is the foundation and substance of all true religion since the fall of man, and, therefore, that the only way of salvation is by faith in him."[124] Referring to him as "the Son of God,"[125] Fuller identifies the Messiah as the

second person of the Trinity, equal in divinity with both the Father and the Holy Spirit. As he states in his *Letters on Systematic Divinity*,

> The Son of God was *manifested* to destroy the works of the devil; he must therefore have been the Son of God antecedently to his being manifested in the flesh. I have heard it asserted that 'Eternal generation is eternal nonsense.' But whence does this appear? Does it follow that, because a son among men is inferior and posterior to his father, therefore it must be so with the Son of God? If so, why should his saying that God was his own Father be considered as making himself *equal* with God? Of the only begotten Son it is not said he was, or will be, but he *is* in the bosom of the Father; denoting the eternity and immutability of his character. There never was a point in duration in which God was without his Son: he *rejoiced always before him*.[126]

As Nettles, Haykin, and Song summarize Fuller's Christological response to Socinianism,

> Christian theology, Fuller insisted, cannot survive apart from Christ. Christ-centered trinitarianism constitutes the biblical revelation of God. Christian faith involves a mental congruity with the great facts about the person and work of Christ. Neither forgiveness nor righteousness come into human experience apart from Christ's work. Knowledge of God is a chimera if it is not grounded in Christ as the Son of God, eternally generated out of the essence of the Father and bound in the union of reciprocal knowledge, love, and communion by the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son.[127]

Third and finally, Fuller's theology of the atonement, as conveyed in his Genesis commentary, is clearly that of penal substitution. The covenant established between God and man in the garden was broken, leaving mankind in the precarious position of estrangement from his maker. The greatest concern for fallen man, then, is that he should be "clothed in a better righteousness" than his own, for he will not be able to stand before a holy God on the day of judgment left to himself.[128] As Fuller describes the situation, there can be no relaxation of the law or God's holy standard. In his mercy, God would send a Savior, the offspring of the woman, to redeem fallen man. Though his heel would be bruised, he would bruise the

head of the serpent, dealing him a mortal blow. The God-Man would do for sinful humanity what it could not do for itself. In covering the nakedness of Adam and Eve with the skin of a sacrificial animal, God foreshadowed the coming sacrifice of the Messiah, who would atone for the sins of Adam's fallen race through his own substitutionary death.[129] As Fuller asks, "Is it not natural to conclude that God only can hide our moral nakedness, and that the way in which he does it is by covering us with the righteousness of our atoning sacrifice?"[130]

In the end, Fuller's Genesis commentary served as a symbol of his love for his congregation in Kettering, with whom he spent so much time "digging at the precious ore."[131] It served as a tool for those seeking to understand the meaning of Scripture and apply it to their lives, making it especially useful for pastors committed to exposition, as Spurgeon thought. And it provides a window into the mature thoughts of a man whose "Fullerism" left an indelible mark, not only on English Baptists, but on the Evangelical movement as a whole.[132]

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1 Though not a biblical scholar per se, Thomas Paine (1737–1809) criticized the biblical account of creation in his work *The Age of Reason* (1794), listed in Fuller's library as "Paine, Thomas. *The Age of Reason; being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology,* Parts 1 and 2 (London, 1795). 'Paines Age of Reason 2 Parts.'" See Michael D. McMullen and Timothy D. Whelan, eds., *The Diary of Andrew Fuller, 1780–1801,* in vol. 1, *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 229. Fuller provided a substantial response to Paine's work with *The Gospel Its Own Witness* (1799).

2 This is true for Baptist exegesis as a whole. See Michael A. G. Haykin, "Baptists Reflecting on Adam & Eve in the 'Long' Eighteenth Century," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 92.

3 Gilbert Laws, *Andrew Fuller: Pastor, Theologian, Rope holder* (London: Carey Press, 1942), 127.

4 Given that I have written extensively on the historical background of Fuller's expositions in previous writings, I have elected to provide a brief summary here, but with the inclusion of important new findings.

5 Satchell provides the following chronological list: "1796 — Finished Isaiah on July 3, 1796, Aug. 7 Joel, Aug. 28, Amos, Dec. 4 Hosea; 1797 — Apr. 23 Micah, June 18 Nahum, July 16 Habakkuk, Aug. 13 Zephaniah, Sep. 3 Jeremiah; 1799 — Feb. 24 Lamentations, Apr. 28 Ezekiel, July 19 Daniel; 1800 — Feb. 23 Haggai, Mar. 16 Zechariah, Aug. 3 Malachi; 1800 — Oct. 5 Job until Aug. 15, 1802, Oct. 10, 1802 Genesis until Aug. 12, 1804; 1804 — Aug. 19 Matthew until Jan. 26, 1806; 1806 — Feb. 2 until Sep. 6, 1807, Sep. 13 John; 1809 — Apr. 23 Revelation; 1810 — June 17 Acts; 1812 — Mar. 2 Romans; 1814 — Nov. 2 1 Corinthians; 1815 – Feb. 12 Proceeded in the Exposition as far as 4:5." Satchell then proceeds to list Fuller's travel schedule for the BMS during the same time period. See John Satchell, "Recollections Concerning Mr. F.," Special Collections, Fuller Baptist Church, Kettering, UK, 1–3.

6 During a recent visit to Fuller Baptist Church, I came across this work by John Satchell, in which he provides a chronological list of Fuller's expositions from 1795–1815. My thanks to the staff at Fuller Baptist Church for kindly hosting myself, David Busch, and Tyler Sanders (both of Gateway Seminary) during our visit in the summer of 2025. Special thanks to David Milner for arranging our visit, his glad assistance with our archival research, and his ongoing efforts to preserve these important records.

7 Andrew Fuller, *Expository Discourses on the Book of Genesis, Interspersed with Practical Reflections* (London: J. Burditt, 1806). Referred to as *EDBG* from here on. All quotations from primary sources are produced exactly.

8 Morris declared bankruptcy in 1809 due to risks he had taken with his printing business. During this era, bankruptcy often led to church discipline in Baptist churches. While Morris would eventually resign his pastorate, Fuller's attempts to confront Morris about his sin were met with rejection, and their friendship (as well as his friendships with his other close Baptist pastor colleagues) was never healed. For more background on the episode, see C. Ryan Griffith, *The Life of Andrew Fuller: A Critical Edition of John Ryland's Biography*, in *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller,* Vol. 17, ed. Michael Haykin (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 50–55.

9 "Quarterly List of New Publications," *The Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal* 8, no. 6 (April–July 1806): 233. For a more extensive review, see "Review of *Expository Discourses on the Book of Genesis, Interspersed with Practical Reflections*," by Andrew Fuller, in *The Eclectic Review,* vol. 2, part 2 (July–December 1806), 2:896–900.

10 "His discourses are not critical, (for he was mostly a self-taught man,) but they are shrewd, instructive, and touching. He seizes the principle points of the passage, and often illustrates them very happily." William Orme, *Bibliotheca Biblica: A Select List of Books on Sacred Literature; with Notices Biographical, Critical, and Bibliographical* (Edinburgh: Adam Black, 1829), 198. For a similar sentiment, see also "Review of New Publications," *The Christian Observer* vol. 5 (1806): 569–72.

11 J. W. Morris, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (London: J. W. Morris, 1816), 206.

12 C. H. Spurgeon, *Commenting and Commentaries: Two Lectures Addressed to the Students of The Pastor's College, Metropolitan Tabernacle, Together with a Catalogue of Biblical Commentaries and Expositions* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1876), 50. Spurgeon is referring to George Bush (1796–1859), who served as a Hebrew Professor at New York University. He plagiarized Fuller on several counts.

13 Jeongmo Yoo lists all thirteen editions of *EDBG* in his unpublished manuscript that will serve as the introduction for a forthcoming critical edition in *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller* (De Gruyter Brill). See Jeongmo Yoo, "Fuller as a Biblical Exegete" (unpublished manuscript for the forthcoming critical edition Fuller's exposition of Genesis in *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller,* 2025), 6–7.

14 Anthony C. Thiselton and Gerald Sheppard, "Biblical Interpretation in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 52. See also See Henning Graf Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation: From the Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century,* ed. Susan Ackerman and Thom Thatcher, trans. Leo G. Perdue, vol. 4, Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 71–72.

15 "In the days before empirical philosophy, Deism, and historical criticism," Hans Frei notes about literal interpretation, "the realistic feature had naturally been identified with the literal sense which in turn was automatically identical with reference to historical truth. But once these thought currents had had their effect, and the 'literal sense' of the stories came to be governed with a heavy hand by, and logically subordinated to, probable and language-neutral historical veracity, the reverse would have had to be the case: in order to recognize the realistic narrative feature as a significant element in its own right (viz. as a story's making literal rather than allegorical or mythical or some other nonliteral sense regardless of whether the literal sense is also a reliable factual report) one would have had to distinguish sharply between literal sense and historical reference. And then one would have had to allow the literal sense to stand as the meaning, even if one believed that the story does not refer historically." Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974), 11.

16 Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb: The Spirituality of Andrew Fuller,* Classics of Reformed Spirituality (Dundas, Ontario, Canada: Joshua Press, 2001), 273.

17 See Muller's explanation of the implications of naturalism for Christology in Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, Volume 2: The Cognitive Foundation of Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 2:140.

18 Yoo, "Fuller as a Biblical Exegete," 141.

19 Stephen J. Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 149.

20 See "Review of Religious Publications: Literary Notices," in *The Evangelical Magazine* 14 (January 1806): 273.

21 Andrew Fuller, "Sermons and Sketches: Sermon LXIX: Preaching Christ (2 Cor. 4:5)," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 1:503. Ellipses are original.

22 For a helpful overview of education for English Baptists during Fuller's lifetime, see Michael A. G. Haykin, "'With light, beauty, and power': Educating English Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century," in *Challenge and Change: English Baptist Life in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Stephn Copson and Peter J. Morden (Didcot, UK: The Baptist Historical Society, 2017), 177–203.

23 Andrew Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men to Do the Will of God,* 1777, Archives and Special Collections, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

24 Yoo, "Fuller as a Biblical Exegete," 11.

25 Noting similarities between Fuller's method and that of John Owen (1616–1683) and Matthew Henry (1662–1714), Yoo notes, "The Puritans developed an expository method that moved consistently from the text to doctrine and then to application, establishing a model that shaped subsequent generations of preachers and commentators. Because this approach maintained a careful balance between scriptural meaning, theological depth, and practical relevance, it endured as a foundational structure for biblical exposition in both preaching and writing." Yoo, "Fuller as a Biblical Exegete," 14.

26 "Considering my time of life, and the numerous avocations on my hands, I may not be able to publish anything more of the kind; and if not, permit me to request that this family book may be preserved as a memorial of our mutual affection, and of the pleasures we have enjoyed together in exploring the treasures of the lively oracles." Fuller, *EDBG,* iv.

27 Fuller, *EDBG,* v.

28 Fuller, *EDBG,* 1.

29 Fuller, *EDBG,* 3.

30 Fuller, *EDBG,* 13.

31 Consistent with Calvin, Fuller does not make a sharp distinction between image and likeness. Combined with his Reformed understanding of total depravity — that while God's image is not destroyed, it is nevertheless distorted and corrupted — Fuller will argue that man is still naturally able to choose Christ, even though he is morally unable. For a helpful overview on the subject, see David Mark Rathel, *Andrew Fuller and the Search for a Faith Worthy of All Acceptation,* T&T Studies in English Theology (New York: T&T Clark, 2024).

32 As Sam Waldron summarizes, "Like the sabbath and unlike any other religious observance, the Lord's Day is a memorial of both creation and redemption. Even as the sabbath memorialized the first creation and the exodus of Israel from Egypt, so also the Lord's Day memorializes a new creation and a greater redemption." Sam Waldron, "Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day," in *A New Exposition of the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*, ed. Rob Ventura (Scotland, UK: Mentor, 2022), 390–91.

33 For Fuller's postmillennialism, which was consistent with many leaders both during and following the Evangelical Awakening, see Crawford Gribben, ed., *Revelation: Expository Discourses on the Apocalypse,* vol. 9, *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 7–34.

34 Fuller, *EDBG,* 23–24. Though hypothetical, an important question swirling about during the Modern Question debate revolved around whether Adam and Eve had both the natural and moral ability to trust in Christ had he been revealed to them in the gospel before the fall. How one answered this question normally had significant implications for how he answered the Modern Question. For an excellent overview of this debate, see David Mark Rathel, "John Gill and the charge of hyper-Calvinism: assessing contemporary arguments in defense of Gill in light of Gill's doctrine of eternal justification," *The Journal of Andrew Fuller Studies* 1 (September 2020): 11–29, as well as Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "Northamptonshire and 'The Modern Question': A Turning-Point in Eighteenth–Century Dissent," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 16, no. 1 (April 1965), 101–123.

35 "I believe, from the same authority, that God created man in the image of his own glorious moral character, a proper subject of his moral government, with dispositions exactly suited to the law he was under, and capacity equal to obey it to the uttermost against all temptations to the contrary. I believe, if Adam, or any holy being, had had the making of a law for himself, he would have made just such an one as God's law is; for it would be the greatest of hardships to a holy being, not to be allowed to love God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and all his mind." Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb,* 274.

36 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols., The Library of Christian Classics (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 1:183.

37 Fuller, *EDBG,* 26.

38 Yoo, "Fuller as a Biblical Exegete," 11.

39 Regarding the failure of believers to repent of sin, Fuller notes, "Again, *It gives Satan a great advantage over us*. It tempts the tempter to apply to us with renewed force. While sin lies unlamented upon the conscience, we are like a besieged city, enfeebled by famine, sickly, and without a heart to resist; and this must needs invite the besieger to renew his onsets. It is by resisting the devil that he flies from us; and so, *vice versa*, by dropping resistance he is encouraged to approach towards us. This in fact is the case with us; while sin remains unlamented there are generally more temptations ply the mind than at other times. When Samson slept and lost his strength, the Philistines were soon upon him. And now put these all together: our strength gone, the Holy Spirit departed, and temptation coming upon us with redoubled force: alas! where are we? Well did the psalmist exclaim, 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, — and in whose spirit there is no guile.'" Fuller, "Miscellaneous Tracts, Essays, Letters, &c.: On Spiritual Declension and the Means of Revival," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 3:625 – 26.

40 See Andrew Fuller, "Strictures on Sentiments of the Rev. Robert Robinson: Letter VI: On the Influence of Satan Upon the Human Mind," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 3:610. In the beginning of his letter, Fuller notes that one of the tenants of Socinianism is the belief that Satan is an allegorical figure, the rhetorical representation of evil. Thus, the demonic cannot influence the minds of man. For a helpful overview of Socinianism and Fuller's response to leading figures within the movement, see Tom Nettles, Michael Haykin, and Baiyu Andrew Song, eds., *Apologetic Works 3: Socinianism*, in *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*. Vol. 7, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 1 – 46.

41 Fuller, *EDBG,* 27.

42 Fuller, *EDBG,* 28. Fuller similarly notes in a sermon on Ephesians 3:14 – 16, "The degree of our spiritual strength may be determined by *the manner in which we resist temptations* — All men are tempted, but all do not resist temptation; this is peculiar to the Christian character. Mere worldly men go with the stream; they walk according to the course of this world, and are hurried along with the impetuous torrent. But if we be Christians, we are not of the world, and are in the habit of resisting temptations. Yet if our resistance be feeble and indeterminate — if we hesitate where we ought to be decided — if we look back on Sodom, like Lot's wife, with a lingering desire after those sinful pleasures which we profess to have given up, and regret the loss of sensual gratifications — are we not carnal, and walk as men? He who is strengthened with might in the inner man will not pause when temptations meet him, nor parley with the tempter; but will readily answer, 'Thus it is written.' It will be sufficient for him to know that God has forbidden this or that. Like a dutiful child, the will of his Father is the guide of his conduct, and that alone will furnish sufficient motives for obedience. 'Thus it is written.'" Fuller, "Sermons and Sketches: Sermon XLIII: Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians (Eph. 3:14 – 16), in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 1:430."

43 Fuller reworks Job 1:22 for the present context.

44 Fuller, *EDBG*, 29.

45 See Fuller's connection between Satan's lie and William Vidler's (1758 – 1816) teachings in Chris Chun, ed., *Apologetic Works 6: On Universalism and Particular Redemption*, in *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*. Vol. 10, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2025), 70. William Vidler was a one-time Particular Baptist pastor turned Universalist and Unitarian. Imbibing the deistic mindset of the eighteenth century, Vidler and others maintained an air of sophistication that deceitfully called into question the veracity of God's Word.

46 Fuller, *EDBG*, 30. Socinianism was another false teaching to which Fuller responded. For Fuller's comments concerning human reason and Socinianism, see Nettles, Haykin, and Song, *Apologetic Works 3: Socinianism*, in *CWAF,* 246.

47 Andrew Fuller, "The Gospel Its Own Witness," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 2:5.

48 Fuller, *EDBG*, 30 – 31.

49 Fuller, *EDBG*, 31.

50 Fuller, *EDBG*, 31.

51 Fuller, *EDBG*, 31.

52 "As one great Furnace flamed, yet from those flames / No light, but rather darkness visible / Served only to discover sights of woe." John Milton, *Paradise Lost,* ed. John Leonard, Penguin Classics (London, UK: Penguin Books, 2000), 1.62 – 64.4.

53 Fuller, *EDBG*, 32.

54 In his work on Antinomianism, Fuller states, "If we had retained our original righteousness, justice itself would have justified us; but having sinned, the question, How shall man be justified with God? is too difficult for created wisdom to solve. Whatever delight the Creator takes in honouring and rewarding righteousness, there is none left in this apostate world for him to honour or reward. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' If any child of Adam, therefore, be now accepted and rewarded as righteous, it must be entirely on different ground from that of his own righteousness. What ground this could be, God only knew." See Andrew Fuller, "Antinomianism Contrasted with the Religion Taught and Exemplified in the Holy Scriptures," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 2:757–58.

55 Fuller, *EDBG,* 32. Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations Upon the Five Bookes of Moses, and the Booke of Psalmes* (London: John Haviland, 1622), "Genesis III:7." Henry Ainsworth (1571–1622) was a Hebrew scholar and a leader of the English separatist church in Amsterdam. Fuller cites Ainsworth throughout his commentary, revealing Fuller's ability to interact with biblical scholarship of a higher caliber than mere devotional commentary. See Michael E. Moody, "Ainsworth, Henry (1569–1622), separatist minister and religious controversialist," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* last modified September 23, 2004 (online edition).

56 Fuller, *EDBG*, 32.

57 This is consistent with the Second London Baptist Confession: "2. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, rendering them fit unto that life to God for which they were created; being made after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change. 3. Besides the law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which whilst they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures." Earl M. Blackburn, "Of Creation," in *A New Exposition of the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*, ed. Rob Ventura (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2022), 97.

58 As Francis Turretin puts it, "Augustine explains this excellently: 'We must diligently and attentively examine if these good things differ, to be able not to sin (*posse non peccare*), and not to be able to sin (*non posse peccare*), to be able not to die, and not to be able to die, to be able not to leave the good, and not to be able to leave the good. For the first man was able not to sin, not to die, not to leave the good" (*Admonition and Grace* 12* [33] [FC 2:285; PL 44.936]). And afterwards: "Therefore the first liberty of will was to be able not to sin (*posse non peccare*), the last will be much greater, not to be able to sin (*non posse peccare*). The first immortality was the power of not dying, the last will be much greater, the incapability of dying. The first was the power of perseverance, the power to not desert the good, the last will be the happiness of perseverance, the want of power to desert the good' (ibid., pp. 285–86)." Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., trans. George Musgrave Giger, vol. 1 (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1992–1997), 8:1:9.

59 Brian Borgman and Jason Ching, "Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment Thereof," in *A New Exposition of the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*, ed. Rob Ventura (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2022), 125.

60 Fuller, *EDBG*, 32.

61 Fuller, *EDBG*, 33.

62 See Fuller's extensive comments on the Song of Solomon in Andrew Fuller, "Strictures on Some of the Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson: Letter V: On the Canonicalness of Solomon's Song," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 3:605–10. More generally, Yoo states, "Allegory was the leading, almost exclusive, way of approaching the Song of Songs in both Christian and Jewish circles until Fuller's time. Jewish scholars interpreted the book as an allegory of the love between Yahweh and Israel, while Christian theologians argued that the book was messianic and praised the love between Christ and the church. Exactly when this view was first embraced by Christians is not known. All one can say is that evidence of it exists as early as Hippolytus (ca. AD 200), though only fragments of his commentary have survived. This kind of exegesis was then followed by Origen, who saw in the Bridegroom a representation of Christ, that is, the eternal Word and Wisdom of God, and in the Bride a representation of the church, that is, the people of God. Since Origen, this ecclesiological interpretation of the Song had become a dominant exegetical model. Many others throughout church history, including John Calvin (1509–1564), Henry Ainsworth (1571–1623), and Matthew Henry (1662–1714), approached the book allegorically and interpreted the relation between the main characters as the description of love between Christ and his bride, the church. Despite the popularity of the allegorical method, the interpretation of the details nevertheless became quite varied and fanciful.

That is, there was no difference in exegetical principles, but there were differences concerning the interpretations of the nuptial metaphor, the use of human love to symbolize the love between God and man." Jeongmo Yoo, "Allegory or Literal Historical Interpretation?: Andrew Fuller's Critique of Robert Robinson's View of the Canonicity of the Song of Songs," *Evangelical Quarterly* 90.3 (2019): 277–78.

63 Fuller adds an interesting note about "the cool of the day" as a reference to God's bringing his people to account in the evening for their sins committed in the day. In the evening, there is a greater opportunity for reflection; thus, God speaks to his people in the quietness and stillness of the night.

64 Fuller, *EDBG*, 34.

65 Fuller, *EDBG*, 34.

66 Fuller, *EDBG*, 35. In speaking of God the Son incarnate, Fuller notes, "Every creature is entirely dependent on the Creator, and is totally incompetent to answer the character of a saviour, especially with respect to that salvation which mankind need. That there may exist a proper foundation for trust, the character of a saviour must unite omnipresent and omnipotent power, to control every intelligent creature, and every particle of matter in the universe, and render every thing subservient to the great purposes of salvation. Omniscient understanding to know perfectly, and at all times, their hearts, their dangers, and their wants. Infinite wisdom, to select unerringly, from an infinite number of supposable schemes, for the accomplishment of the great object, that which is best, both with respect to the end, and the infinitude of antecedent means. Absolute immutability, to prosecute invariably the same designs; and infinite love, to rise above millions of provocations, and embrace perpetually the same good." Andrew Fuller, "The Deity of Christ," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 3:697.

67 Andrew Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity: Letter VIII: The Perfections of God," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 1:705.

68 Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, ed. John E. Smith and Harry S. Stout, rev. ed., vol. 2, The Works of Jonathan Edwards (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 255.

69 Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," in *Works,* 1:705.

70 Fuller, *EDBG*, 35.

71 Fuller, *EDBG*, 35.

72 Fuller, *EDBG*, 35.

73 Fuller, *EDBG*, 35.

74 Fuller, *EDBG*, 35.

75 Fuller, *EDBG*, 36.

76 Fuller, *EDBG*, 36.

77 Fuller, *EDBG*, 36.

78 For a brief summary of the theological controversy, see Chun, *Apologetic Works 6: On Universalism and Particular Redemption*, in *CWAF,* 44–47; Peter J. Morden, "Further Controversy," in *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815),* Studies in Evangelical History and Thought (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2015), 124–149; Ian Hugh Clary, "'The center of Christianity — the doctrine of the cross': Andrew Fuller as a Reformed Theologian," *Evangelical Quarterly* 90.3, (2019): 195–212.

79 Chun, *Apologetic Works 6: On Universalism and Particular Redemption*, in *CWAF,* 58–59.

80 Chun, *Apologetic Works 6: On Universalism and Particular Redemption*, in *CWAF,* 133–34.

81 Clary, "'The center of Christianity — the doctrine of the cross': Andrew Fuller as a Reformed Theologian," 211.

82 "As it turns out, he held a view of the atonement that earlier Reformed theologians held, in line with Dordt, while maintaining the penal emphasis of even Grotius himself. So if the charge of Grotianism is to stand, it must do so under the conditions either of how it was at times misused in the seventeenth century (as a wrongful accusation against someone like Baxter), or how modern scholars have understood Grotius's own thought on the atonement as not necessarily containing all of the theological baggage that some have accused it of carrying." Clary, "'The center of Christianity — the doctrine of the cross': Andrew Fuller as a Reformed Theologian," 211.

83 Fuller, *EDBG*, 37.

84 Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb*, 274–75.

85 Fuller, *EDBG*, 37–38.

86 Being the "tempter" of her husband, as Fuller observes, "and being also of the weaker sex, it might have been expected that she would not have gone on the provoke the vengeance of her Creator." Fuller, *EDBG*, 38. Taken in its broader context, Fuller is not speaking of women in pejorative manner. See especially his comments in Fuller, *EDBG*, 24–25.

87 Fuller, *EDBG*, 38.

88 Fuller, *EDBG*, 39.

89 See McMullen and Whelan, *The Diary of Andrew Fuller, 1780–1801, CWAF*, 221.

90 I have refrained from reproducing the entire passage for the sake of space. However, Fuller refers to a number of Scripture passages in making his point, including Gen. 6:3; Deut. 29:4; Neh. 9:30; Isa. 5:4; Matt. 11:20–34, 21:33–38; Acts 7:51. See Andrew Fuller, "Answers to Queries: The Love of God, and Its Extension to the Non-Elect," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (1845; Reprint, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 3:771.

91 For a brief overview of Fuller's distinction between natural and moral inability and its connection with Jonathan Edwards, see Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815),* 47–68.

92 Fuller, *EDBG*, 39.

93 Fuller, *EDBG*, 39.

94 Fuller, *EDBG*, 39. While some have held that fallen angels may ultimately be redeemed, it is unclear who Fuller is referring to regarding the redemption of angels before the cursing of the serpent. For a brief overview of historic beliefs concerning angels, see Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 298–318.

95 Fuller, *EDBG*, 40–41.

96 Fuller, "Answers to Queries: The Fall of Adam," in *Works,* 3:766.

97 Fuller, *EDBG*, 41.

98 Fuller, *EDBG*, 42.

99 Fuller, *EDBG,* 43.

100 Fuller, *EDBG,* 42.

101 Fuller, *EDBG*, 43.

102 Gribben, *Revelation*, in *CWAF,* 145–46.

103 Fuller, *EDBG*, 43–44.

104 Fuller, *EDBG*, 44.

105 Fuller, "Sermons and Sketches: Sermon X: Jesus the True Messiah (Psa. 40:6–8)," in *Works*, 1:212.

106 Fuller, *EDBG*, 44–45.

107 Fuller, *EDBG*, 45. Fuller also signals to the reader to see his comments on Genesis 4:11–12.

108 For a detailed analysis of Fuller's federal theology, see Thomas Kennedy Ascol, "The Doctrine of Grace: A Critical Analysis of Federalism in the Theologies of John Gill and Andrew Fuller," (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989). More specifically, Ascol provides an interesting contrast between Gill and Fuller regarding "immediate" and "mediate" imputation in pp. 164–170. Fuller's view has been notoriously difficult to pin down here. The situation was made more difficult in his exchange with Abraham Booth. As Chun notes, "Despite Booth's criticism, Fuller maintains that neither he nor Calvin (according to Fuller's interpretation of Calvin), by embracing the 'as if' dimensions of imputation, are abandoning either the classical dimensions of forensic imputation or penal substitution. The debate between Booth and Fuller becomes even more difficult to adjudicate here, as they each use the terms 'proper,' 'real,' and 'figurative' in different ways and with differing nuances." Chun, *Apologetic Works 6: On Universalism and Particular Redemption*, in *CWAF,* 50.

109 Fuller, "Sermons and Sketches: Sermon XX: The Believer's Review of His State (Eph. 2:13)," in *Works*, 1:301.

110 Fuller notes that there may have been pain in childbirth before the fall, which is why the curse pertains to the multiplication of pain. See Fuller, *EDBG*, 45.

111 Fuller, *EDBG*, 45. Fuller includes a parenthetical note, calling the reader to see his comments on 2:18–25, where he paraphrases Matthew Henry's commentary. See Matthew Henry, *An exposition of all the books of the Old and New Testament: wherein the chapters are summ'd up in contents; the sacred text inserted at large, in paragraphs, or verses; and each paragraph, or verse, reduc'd to its proper heads; the sense given, and largely illustrated, with practical remarks and observations,* vol. 1, 3rd ed. (London: J. Clark and R. Hett, J. Knapton, J. and B. Sprint, J. Darby, D. Midwinter, A. Bettesworth, J. Osborn and T. Longman, R. Robinson, S. Palmer, J. Batley, R. Ford, T. Cox, A. Ward, E. Symon, W. Bell, T. Combes, and S. Chandler, 1725), 1:11, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*.

112 Fuller, *EDBG,* 46–47. In a funeral sermon preached on February 28, 1790, concerning this text, Fuller summarized, "The truths here taught us are the most serious and interesting. None doubt the reality of death, and few that of judgment; but many live as if they credited neither. The sum of the text is, *Christ is our substitute, both in death and judgment;* and yet we die and must appear at judgment. To make this plain, observe, we are appointed to death and judgment in two ways: — First, By our subjection to corruption, or corporeal death, and to an appearance before God in judgment. In this view the appointment takes place upon mankind in general, good and bad, and that notwithstanding the death and mediation of Christ. Secondly, By the sentence of God as a Lawgiver. It was the sentence against man: 'In the day thou eatest,' &c. In this view death includes more than a *subjection to corruption;* it includes its sting: and judgment includes more than *appearing;* it includes our final condemnation. This last is the meaning of the text. It speaks not of what actually takes place, but of what *must have taken place* had not the mediation of Christ interposed. The text speaks of the penal sentence of the Lawgiver, and then of our deliverance from that sentence through Christ, our substitute; so that though in some sense it is still appointed for men to die, and to appear before God in judgment, yet not in the sense of the text. *Believers* will find death divested of its sting, and judgment of its terror, ver. 28." Fuller, "Sermons and Sketches: Sermon LX: Christ Our Substitute in Death and Judgment (Heb. 9:27–28)," in *Works,* 1:475.

113 Fuller, *EDBG*, 48.

114 Fuller, *EDBG,* 48–49. Fuller is referencing Ephesians 4:23.

115 Fuller, *EDBG*, 49.

116 Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor and Theologian,* Studies in Baptist Life and Thought (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2010), 95.

117 Fuller, *EDBG*, 49–50. Fuller adds a note telling the reader to see his comments on Genesis 2:9 regarding the description of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

118 Fuller, "Sermons and Sketches: Sermon XXVI: The Magnitude of the Heavenly Inheritance (Rom. 8:18–23)," in *Works,* 1:333–34. Fuller's view is thus consistent with that of the Second London Baptist Confession: "Moreover, man having brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace, wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life, his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe." Mitch Lush, "Of God's Covenant," in *A New Exposition of the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*, ed. Rob Ventura (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2022), 135.

119 Fuller, *EDBG,* 50. Fuller cites Romans 3:20.

120 Fuller, *EDBG*, 50.

121 Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb,* 275. By "liable to condemnation and death," Fuller seems to imply that more than mere corruption is imputed to Adam's posterity. Refer to note 108 for a brief discussion of "immediate" vs. "mediate" imputation of Adam's guilt.

122 "If sinners were naturally and absolutely unable to believe in Christ, they would be equally unable to disbelieve; for it requires the same powers to reject as to embrace. And, in this case, there would be no room for an inability of another kind: a dead body is equally unable to do evil as to do good; and a man naturally and absolutely blind could not be guilty of shutting his eyes against the light. 'It is indwelling sin,' as Dr. Owen says, 'that both disenableth men unto, and hinders them from believing, *and that alone*. Blindness of mind, stubbornness of the will, sensuality of the affections, all concur to keep poor perishing souls at a distance from Christ. Men are made blind by sin, and cannot see his excellency; obstinate, and will not lay hold of his righteousness; senseless, and take no notice of their eternal concernments.'" Fuller, "The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation," in *Works*, 2:357. For Fuller's use of Owen, see Carl R. Trueman, "John Owen and Andrew Fuller," *Eusebia* 9 (Spring 2008): 53–69.

123 "Take away Christ; nay, take away the deity and atonement of Christ; and the whole ceremonial of the Old Testament appears to us little more than a dead mass of uninteresting matter: prophecy loses all that is interesting and endearing; the gospel is annihilated, or ceases to be that good news to lost sinners which it professes to be; practical religion is divested of its most powerful motives, the evangelical dispensation of its peculiar glory, and heaven itself of its most transporting joys." Nettles, Haykin, and Song, *Apologetic Works 3: Socinianism*, in *CWAF*, 196.

124 Fuller, *EDBG*, 44.

125 Fuller, *EDBG*, 42.

126 Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," in *Works,* 1:710. In one of his "Answers to Queries," Fuller took up the subject of the obedience and suffering of Christ. In doing so, he reveals something of a sophisticated Christology. He states, "In the person of Christ the Divinity and humanity were so intimately united, that perhaps we ought not to conceive of the latter as having any such distinct subsistence as to be an agent by itself, or as being obliged to obey or do any thing of itself, or on its own account; Christ, as man, possessed no being *on his own account.* He was always in union with the Son of God; a public person, whose very existence was for the sake of others. Hence his coming under the law is represented, not only as a part of his humiliation, to which he was naturally unobliged, but as a thing *distinct from his assuming human nature*; which one should think it could not be, if it were necessarily included in it. He was 'made of a woman, made under the law;'—'made in the likeness of men, he took upon him the form of a servant;'—'being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death.'" See Fuller, "Answers to Queries: Obedience and Suffering of Christ," in *Works*, 3:785–86.

127 Nettles, Haykin, and Song, *Apologetic Works 3: Socinianism*, in *CWAF*, 41.

128 Fuller, *EDBG*, 36.

129 Fuller does not give any hint about the extent of the atonement here. However, as Robert Oliver observes in his reflection on the controversy between Booth and Fuller, "Fuller was clearly stating a position long held by many Calvinists that 'the death of Christ was sufficient for all, but efficient for the elect.' He was concerned to safeguard an unfettered presentation of Christ to all, but at the same time to teach that the atoning sacrifice of Christ fulfilled the purpose of God in election." Robert W. Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists 1771–1892: From John Gill to C. H. Spurgeon* (Edinburgh, UK: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2006), 168.

130 Fuller, *EDBG*, 49. Michael Haykin notes that, "Although Fuller used the language of penal substitution with regard to the atonement to the end of his life, his preferred language about the cross grew to be that of the governmental theory. A version of this model was propounded by the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), and for this reason it is often denominated the Grotian version, though there are substantial questions about whether or not the model as it develops is fully in line with Grotius's thinking about the death of Christ. Moreover, as Oliver Crips has handily shown, the governmental view of the death of Christ that received a warm welcome in New England among the New Divinity, cannot be regarded as identical to that passed down as the Grotian view. Both adhere to a penal, non-substitutionary view of the atonement, but that of the doctrine of the New Divinity — and Fuller — is developed within a specifically Calvinistic mentalité." Michael A. G. Haykin, "Great Admirers of the Transatlantic Divinity: Some Chapters in the Story of Baptist Edwardsianism," in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of New England Theology*, ed. Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 202–203.

131 Fuller, *EDBG*, iv.

132 "1785: Publication of Andrew Fuller's *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* marks the triumph of evangelicalism among England's Particular Baptists." Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys,* vol. 1, A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements and Ideas in the English-Speaking World (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 193.