



What does the Bible mean by 'old man'? When did the old man become a part of Man? What happened to the 'old man' at the cross? how does the knowledge of it benefit us?

This is **one of the most important teachings in the Bible**, about which we need to have a clear understanding. Hence, I have tried to explain in detail.

The first question to be addressed is **what is 'old man'?**

In order to understand this whole subject, first, we need to understand that bible refers **man's fallen sinful nature which he inherited from his spiritual ancestor Adam as 'OLD MAN'. This sinful nature is hostile and rebellious to God.**

It should be noted that the term “sin nature” is not found in the Scriptures. The Biblical terms are ‘sin from the heart’ ‘old heart’, ‘heart of stone’, ‘the foreskin of heart’ ‘body of flesh’ etc.

Next, we need to know **how the “old man” (“sinful heart” ,“sinful nature”, "rebellious nature") became a part of men.**

We know that God did not create man with an ‘old man’ in him. He made man in His ‘own image’; perfect, uncorrupted by sin.

Genesis 1:26-27 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The Word of God clearly states that man was created in the ‘Image of God’. Here, we need to understand what the **“Image of God”** is.

This does not mean that God had a body, so Man was also created with a body. If it was so, it might as well be said animals were also created in the image of God. So the physical image of man is not the ‘image of God’, instead, it is the ‘character of God’. This can be clearly understood from the Scriptures (**Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Colossians 3:10**)

God created man, primarily to reveal His character through him. God created the spirit of man/heart of man as the medium to manifest the character of God, making him distinct from the rest of creation.

How does God reveal His image, character through man?

*Proverbs 20:27 says “The **spirit of a man** is the lamp of the God”. A lamp cannot produce light on its own. It's the oil that illuminates the lamp. A lamp can illuminate only through an **uninterrupted union with oil**. The word of God continuously refers to the **Spirit of God as the oil**.*

When the man in communion with God, just like the lamp and oil, reflected God's image (character). God looked at him and said ‘it is good’.

When God said 'it is good', it was not concerning any of the external features of the man, because the Bible says "**man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart**" (1 Samuel 16:7).

So, when God said 'it is good' He was looking at the heart/spirit of man which is the medium to reflect God's character.

The figurative "heart" in the Scriptures is not for the physical heart, instead, it refers to being the source or centre of man's inner life.

When God created man, his heart was the medium of the goodness, the life of God. God in Spirit lived in that heart, controlled his soul and revealed Himself, His image, through the works of man.

But when Man, believing in Satan's lie, chose to disobey God, he rebelled and stepped out of his fellowship with God. As God warned him, that very moment he died spiritually. Moreover, an old man came into man's heart or man's heart had a foreskin of sin, thus the heart of man became the centre of sin, and the soul of man became corrupted through the sin flowing from the heart.

Man, who reflected God's character now started to reflect the evil, rebellious character of Satan. But that was not the end, the Bible says from thereon, the heart of all men born from the fallen Adam was sinful and the evil character of Satan flowed out from the sinful heart.

So the heart, which God in the beginning saw was good, He now sees it as corrupted.

*Genesis 6:5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intent of the **thoughts of his heart** was only evil continually.*

This source of sin, the sinful heart or the foreskin of sin in human heart of the fallen man is what God's word refers to as the OLD MAN. It came in Adam when he believed the lie of Satan and obeyed him.

In other humans, because they are born of Adam, they are born with a sinful heart. As long as **this old man is in a man, he is a slave of sin, as the Bible says.**

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin".

Everyone in this earth is born with this old man, with a sinful heart which manifests as the sinful character. That is why Jesus said this sin that comes from inside defiles him.

*Mark 7:20-23 And He said, "What comes out of a man that defiles a man. For from **within, out of the heart of men**, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."*

We need to understand that there are three things which happened to the fallen Adam and thereon to all men born from Adam; which needs to be dealt with. They are

1. **Sinful heart**, i.e. the old man – In the words of Jesus, this is the centre of sin which makes a man unclean. This is at the very core of our inner being and the root of our self-identity and rebellion toward God. This is the source which corrupts the soul of man and makes it sinful. In the fallen man, this is the centre of Satan's operation.

2. **Sinful flesh**: Flesh, in the Bible, often refers to the sinful soul (mind, emotions, and thoughts) of man. The sin flowing out of the sinful heart of man corrupts his soul. Man's thoughts, intentions and emotions become sinful and rebellious to God.

3. **Sinful acts**: The sin flowing from the sinful heart of man makes his soul sinful and it comes out of the body as sinful acts. Thereby man manifests the rebellious character of Satan.

The old covenant which God established through Moses could not resolve these three fundamental problems because of the indwelling sin in the man Therefore, God established the new covenant through the blood of His Son as a solution to it (*Romans 8:3*).

All the prophets in the Old Testament prophesied that through Jesus Christ there will be a permanent solution for all these three problems.

A permanent solution will be made possible only when the head of Satan is crushed. Then man will be freed from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the old man inside him. Through this divine plan of salvation, God can once again rule in man and reveal His character through him.

God's plan of redemption wasn't to sanctify or improve our sinful heart but to remove it completely and to implant a new heart, from which will flow the streams of living water. (*Romans 6:6; Colossians 2:11, John 7:38*)

God made it possible by sending His Son to earth as a complete Man, born of a woman. That was the first promise which God gave to the fallen man.

"The seed of the woman will crush your (Satan's) head" (Genesis 3:5).

As per the divine plan of salvation, Jesus the son of God was born of a woman. Though Jesus came to earth as a perfect Man, born of woman, **He did not come as the fallen man in the sinful nature of Adam, because He was a Holy offspring born by the Holy Spirit.**

That is why, Jesus was different from everyone in the world, in all these three things caused due to the fall of Adam.

Jesus Christ did not have a sinful rebellious heart. Instead, the holy heart of Jesus was the throne where God the Father dwelt.

The soul of Christ was not corrupted by sin, but Christ submitted his soul continuously to the will of God

Therefore, the body of Jesus Christ was not polluted but completely manifested the works of God who dwelt in His heart

Yes, **Jesus was the second man who came to earth without sin.**

Even though Jesus Christ did not have a sinful heart, or a sinful flesh (soul corrupted by sin), but as a complete man, **Jesus had a free will or freedom of choice.**

This is because God has created man with free will and freedom to choose. Adam was tempted because of his free will. In his freedom, he acted as per his will and submitted his will to Satan, thus he stepped out from the authority of God to the authority of Satan.

Just as the first man Adam without sin was tempted, the second man Jesus who is without sin was also tempted by Satan. The plan of Satan, just like the first man was to make the second man also to sin. Thereby to bring him out of the authority of God and dependence on God and destroy God's plan of redemption. This was the basic nature of all the temptations of Jesus.

Where Adam failed, Jesus by His dependence on God was victorious over sin and defeated Satan.

But we need to understand that just the sinless and **victorious life of Jesus alone cannot free mankind from the bondage of sin.** Only through His death on the cross, Jesus accomplished the most important work of crushing the head of the serpent and freeing man from the bondage of sin and Satan forever. (*Colossians 2:15, Hebrews 2:14*).

In other words, if through His life Jesus overcame and defeated sin, by His death He freed mankind from the bondage of sin.

Now let us consider carefully, **how did Jesus Christ through His death free mankind from the bondage of sin and the 'old man'?**

The truth which the Bible teaches us is that not only did Jesus die for our sins but by Christ's death on the cross, God destroyed and removed our sin nature, which was at the very core of our inner being and the root of our self-identity and rebellion toward God. By the divine exchange on the cross by which Christ replaced our sinful, rebellious nature with His holy nature. Our old man is crucified with Him at the cross and we have been raised up from spiritual death as a new man in Christ.

Through this divine heart transplantation, God delivered us forever from the bondage of sin and made it possible for Christ to dwell in us in all His authority, instead of us continuing under the authority of sin and Satan. **This is what happened when we were born-again.**

This heart transplantation under the new covenant was continuously referred by the prophets in the Old Testament as 'circumcision of heart', removing of the 'heart of stone' etc.

*Deuteronomy 30:6 "And the Lord **your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants**, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live".*

*Ezekiel 36:26-27 I will give you a **new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.***

*Jeremiah 31:33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: **I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts,** and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

The Bible declares that these promises of the Old Testament have been fulfilled under the new covenant through Jesus Christ.

*Romans 6:6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the **body of sin** might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

*Colossians 2:11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the **body of the sins of the flesh**, by the circumcision of Christ,*

*2 Corinthians 3:3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on **tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.***

The Bible makes it very clear that old man has been crucified, the sinful body has been removed by the circumcision of the heart, the old heart of stone has been removed, and a new heart of flesh has been implanted, where Christ lives as Lord.

The next question is how does it affect us if we do not know or believe the gospel that the old man has been crucified with Christ, and the old heart has been removed and that now Jesus Christ lives in our new heart?

This knowledge is very important for our Christian life. We know that, when one acknowledges that Jesus died for his sins, he will be freed from the penalty of sins. But Satan still doesn't want him to know that his old man has been crucified and that the source of his sins- the sinful heart has been removed.

That is because Satan knows when this great truth is revealed, man will be freed from the power of sin also .

Here are a few related verses you should know.

*Romans 6:6 **knowing this**, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that **we should no longer be slaves of sin.** For when we died with Christ we **were set free from the power of sin.***

*6:17-18 But God be thanked that though **you were slaves of sin**, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. **And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness***

6:22 But now **having been set free from sin**, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the **liberty by which Christ has made us free** and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **has made me free from the law of sin and death**.

Today, there are a lot of teachings focused around getting freedom from sin by fasting, praying, avoiding sinful situations, observing fellowship, confessing sins to people, maintaining physical discipline, and many similar practices.

It is true that God's children those who are already freed from sin may follow the above practices for spiritual growth and to lead a spiritual life. But the Bible does not teach us **that these practices will get us freedom from sin**.

Not only that, if we carefully study God's Word, we will find that wherever it **speaks to the born-again believers**; There is **No commandment** which says we **must get free from Sin**, neither does it **give us any promise** that we **will be freed from sins**, nor does it teach us **the ways to practice and get freedom from sin**.

Instead, it **declares the truth** to the born-again people that when you are joined to Christ in spirit, **your old man has been crucified with Christ**, the old sinful heart has been removed and as a result, **you have been already freed from sin and now Jesus Christ lives in you**. (*Romans 6:3, Colossians 2:11, 1:17*)

But you should know and believe this truth, because only when we, through faith, recognize that our old man was crucified with Christ, and we are no longer under the slavery of SIN, can we truly experience the freedom from the law of sin and from bondage to sin.

A question may arise in your mind that **why then do many born-again people still live under the slavery of sin?** There are many reasons for that, but Lord himself gives **the first and foremost reason**.

John 8: 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Yes, many who believe the Gospel that Jesus Christ died for my sins, do not believe that **I, my old man, has been crucified with Him and that the old heart has been removed and as a result, we have been freed from sin**. Bible also explains the reason for this

Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

It is because many who preach the gospel that Jesus died for our sins (*Romans 5:8*), do not preach the gospel that our old man has died with Him (*Romans 6:8*).

So because they **do not hear, they do not believe and as a result, they are not freed.**

From the context of this passage (*Romans 10: 17*), we can conclude that when someone hears and acts on the word of God that Christ died for them (*Romans 5:8*), they will experience deliverance from the penalty of sin. In the same way, when someone hears and acts on the word of God that they died with Christ (*Romans 6:8*), they will experience deliverance from the power of sin.

Every truth in the Bible only benefits us when we accept and act on it by faith.

All my dear readers, God wants you to know this great truth!. **When Jesus died on the cross, He not only died to provide us forgiveness for our sins; He died to provide us freedom from our sinful rebellious nature. For when Christ died on the cross, God performed a divine heart transplant. By this divine operation of the cross of Christ, God completely delivered us from all indwelling sin, so that His Son could dwell in us by His Spirit (*Galatians 2:20*).**

God exchanged our terminally sin-sick heart with Christ's divine heart so that we would no longer be slaves to sin but would be slaves to righteousness (*Romans 6:23*).

When you know this truth, and it remains in you, you truly become free and you can experience this freedom in your life. I pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the true freedom freely given us in Christ.

Br. Jinu Ninan

NB: As a continuation please read the article "What is flesh?" And what is the difference between the flesh and the old man?"

If you are interested in learning more about this important Biblical truth, please visit the Bible teaching website at www.ChristCrucified.info